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HYMN FOR SABBATH EVENING.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

Star of the holy Sabbath Eve!
How radiant like some angel there,
With blessings for the Earth below,
Thou sittest on thy throne of air!—
Thy purple clouds around thee hung
In tented folds upon the Blue,
Purer and grander than a king
Of Orient islands ever knew.

II.

Star of the holy Sabbath Eve!
How calm the eyes of one can gaze
On the sweet peace that seems a part,
A spirit of thy tender rays,
If he from dark gross matter turned,
And reared a temple on the sod,
Where through the long, still, holy day
His soul looked up unto its God.

III.

Star of the holy Sabbath Eve
How plainly dost thou seem the word
Of Him who smiles on duty done,
Though from thy throne no tone is heard:
Yea, there is language never writ—
And harpless music, spirit-rolled,
As holy in its silentness,
As seraph-hymns from chords of gold.

IV.

Star of the holy Sabbath Eve!
O, may thy tender teachings now
Fall with a wild but deathless power
On every meditative brow,
While here beneath thy sacred light,
We muse upon His deed sublime
That gave tost Earth of one day rest,
The promise of a stormless time.

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THE ORDEAL.

ROSALIND HUBERT;
OR,
THE HILLSIDE TRAGEDY.

A STORY OF SUNSHINE AND SHADOW IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER XIII.

INTELLIGENCE.

The sun was sinking towards the distant line of trees when Simon Peter Drake drove up the hillside and stopped at the farmer's door. When he entered the kitchen he found the family all there, and Albert Varrondale was with them. They gazed inquiringly into his face, and they knew his news must be bad, for he showed it too plainly to be mistaken. Betsy, however, started quickly up and ran to meet him.

"O—Simon—have you found her? Don't say no!"

But the man made no reply. He put her away, and sank into a seat. They all looked eagerly towards him, but Albert's face bore the deepest marks of agonizing suspense. The youth leaned forward, with his hands clutched nervously upon his knees, and so prayerful was his gaze that Simon tried to avoid it.

"Come—speak," said Mr. King.

"What's the use?" returned Drake, in a dejected tone. "I haint done noth'n!"

"But you've searched, Simon? You've done something?"

"*Searched?* By the immortal Moses! I've searched Bosting all over. Drat the cussed snake, I say!"

"And no news?" groaned Albert, sinking back.

"Not a bit."

"I'd better gone with you," the youth said, in a tone of self-reproach.

"Haint you been enough, Mr. Varrondale? But we couldn't a' hunted any more ef there'd been a hundred with me. I've watched every movement Tom Gondam's made for three days, but 'twan't no go. Blast his ugly pictur, didn't I want to put my hands onto him! Ef I'd got one grab at him I'd a' made his old pate ring, naow I tell yeou!"

At this juncture a knock was heard at the door, and Mrs. King answered it. When she returned she was followed by a man in a sailor's garb. He was a short, strange-looking man, with a huge black beard, and a pair of very sharp, snapping eyes. By his walk and his look he plainly showed that he had not been long from the ocean.

"Good evenin', gentle folks," he said, taking a chair, and depositing his hat upon the floor by his side.

"Good evening, sir," Mr. King returned.

"My name is John Peters," the stranger added; "and I s'pose you are Mr. King?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well—I'm a blunt man, and I'll come right to the business. You've had a girl living with you named Rosalind Hubert?"

"Yes, sir," replied the farmer, quickly.

All were interested now, and the new-comer was regarded with eager looks. Albert had leaned forward again, and his fingers once more clutched his knees.

"D'ye know where she is now?" the sailor asked.

"No, sir—we do not. But—perhaps you do not know, sir—you may not be aware—that she has been—I may say—a—that she has been foully taken from us by her uncle."

"Her *uncle?*" repeated the sailor, with a curious look.

"Yes, sir—her uncle—Thomas Gondam."

"Ah—he's an *uncle*, is he?" said John Peters, patting his foot upon the floor.

"Yes, sir. He gave us the girl when she was a mere infant. Her parents had run away, or left the country for some cause, and the child had been given him to dispose of. But, sir—can you tell us anything concerning her? We are very anxious."

"He said her parents had run away, did he?" pursued the visitor, seeming to take no notice of the last question.

"He intimated as much," replied Mr. King. "He left us to infer that they had been guilty of some crime, and had fled in consequence."

"You begin to enlighten me," said Peters, with an anxious, eager look. "Tell me what you can, and then I'll tell you all I can. You say Gondam brought the child here, and pretended that her parents had run off?"

"Yes, sir."

"But he said her name was Hubert?"

"Yes."

"It's a wonder he hadn't given her a false name. However—did he say anything else at that time?"

"Only that he hoped we'd be good to her. He wanted to get her with a farmer somewhere, and he said he'd heard me well spoken of."

"One thing more he said, you know," interposed the good wife. "He said he'd never come for her—to take her away from us—unless her parents came back."

"Ah—yes,—he said that, too," admitted the farmer.

"And what excuse did he make when he came for her?" the sailor asked.

"That he had found her parents—that they had come back, and wanted to see her. And he took her away from us. She couldn't help but go, and yet there was a weight upon her heart, and tears upon her pretty cheeks——"

"Cuss his old carcass!" snapped Simon Peter.

The farmer turned an admonitory glance upon his man—then wiped a drop of moisture from his eye—and then continued—

"He told us she should come and see us, and that we should go and see her; but it hasn't been so. After he'd carried her away he came and got her things, and that was the last of it. We've hunted all over the city, but no Rosalind can be found. Albert here—Albert Varrondale—went in first. He went and saw Gondam, and was assured that Rosalind's parents had gone off West again, and carried her with 'em. But we didn't believe it. We believed he lied to Albert."

"We *know'd* he lied—the consarned old cuss!" burst forth Simon Peter. "I know'd he'd lie afore he took her away. I told 'em so the minnit he'd gone! The infernal old scamp!"

"Simon is right, though he has a rough way of expressing it," remarked King, extenuatingly. "He has done much, too, towards searching for her. He has been in Boston three days, having arrived only a few minutes before you did, sir,—but he could learn nothing."

"You loved Rosalind, then?" said Peters.

"*Loved* her!" There was no need for Mr. King to say more. Those two words, with the look and tone, were enough. They told of a love which no amount of explanation could have expressed.

"She was our child, sir," said Mrs. King, wiping a tear from her eye.

"She was an angel—bless her pure soul!" exclaimed Simon Peter, with emphasis. "A right down born angel, she was!"

"And you loved her, I dare say?" said Peters, casting a searching glance upon Albert.

The youth's lip quivered, and as he turned away his head, and covered his face with his hand, a tear trickled down his fingers and fell upon the floor.

Surely that was answer enough; and the visitor seemed to think so, for he turned to the farmer again, remarking as he did so—

"Now, sir, I will answer any questions you may wish to ask."

"You are acquainted with Rosalind?" said Mr. King.

"That can hardly be," answered Peters. "I think I saw her, however, when she was an infant. I was at her mother's funeral."

"Ha! Then she has no mother?"

"No, sir."

"Has she a father?"

"No. Her father died before she was born."

"The lyin' cuss!" exclaimed Simon Peter.

"Oh! how that man has deceived us!" the farmer groaned. "What a heart he must have!"

"A hard one, most surely," responded Peters.

"It's a gizzard!" asserted Simon, savagely.

"You were acquainted with the family, sir?" pursued Mr. King.

"I was acquainted with a very near relative of the family," explained the sailor—"with one who was a dear and valuable friend to me."

"Is that relative living?"

"I couldn't tell you at present. It was her grandfather. He came home from India a short time since, and one of the greatest—in fact, it was *the* greatest—hopes he had of home was, to find his grandchild, and bask in the sunlight of her love through the evening of his life. I have heard him say so a great many times."

"And do you say the old man came home?" asked the farmer, nervously.

"Yes," returned the sailor. "I have traced him from New York to Boston, and I feel sure he called upon Thomas Gondam. A—in fact, I know he did, because Gondam admits it. He called upon the broker, who is a relative of his, and left some business with him, and then started to find his grandchild."

"Did he know which way to look?" inquired Mr. King, with marked agitation.

"Yes—I think so. I traced him to the stage office, and I am very confident he took the stage for this place."

"When?"

"It was on Saturday evening—the twenty-second of last month."

"Good Heavens!" ejaculated the farmer. "That was the very night. We found a dead man on the hillside the next morning, sir—an old man—a white-haired, venerable man—who had fallen by the way. He was half up the lane. Merciful Providence! It must have been him!"

"I have heard of the circumstance," said Peters, in a sad tone. "I have heard it all. But that is enough for the present. I shall come to that by-and-by. There will be an account to settle on that score."

"An account?" repeated King, eagerly. "Do you suspect any one?"

The sailor looked sharply into the farmer's face; and then, with a shake of the head, he replied—

"Never mind now. You shall know all about that in good season. But there is another who needs our attention first. I mean Rosalind."

"So she does, sir."

"And I think I know where she is."

"What!" uttered the farmer, with a sudden start.

"Know where she is!" cried Albert, springing forward from his chair. "O, sir—tell me!—give me but a clue—and she shall be found!"

"That's just what I want, my boy," returned John Peters, gazing into the youth's face with a look of admiration. "That's what I came out here for. Sit down—sit down—and I'll tell you. There are reasons why I cannot prosecute this search as I would; but I have discovered the girl's whereabouts. Or, at least, I feel assured that I have; and now we must have her back here."

"O! bless you, sir!" cried Betsy, springing forward and grasping one of the sailor's hands. "You *do* know where our dear, good Rosa is? You will bring her back to us! Oh! you will, sir! Bring her back!—bring her back!—and if Thomas Gondam gets her again, he'll have to get me with her!"

"And he'd git sumth'n else, too—blast his consarned old pictur!" exclaimed Simon Peter, with a crash of the fist upon his knee that made the old kitchen quake.

"I think you'll see her again, my sweet one," Peters said, drawing the impulsive girl towards him and kissing her cheek. "Forgive me. That was for Rosa." He wiped a tear from his eye, and then he smiled, as he added—

"I'm a blunt man. No harm, I hope."

"*No, indeed, sir,*" quickly returned Betsy. "Bring dear Rosa back to us, and you may kiss me a thousand times."

"I hope I may be able to claim those kisses, my dear," the sailor replied; and then turning to Albert, he continued—

"If I am not mistaken, sir, Rosalind would rather see you at this time than any one else?"

"You won't make us jealous by answering truly, Albert," remarked the old farmer, as the youth hesitated. "Yes, sir," he added, to his visitor,—"she does love this young man with the holiest love her heart knows. And he's worthy of her, sir. He has just graduated at Old Harvard, and all was arranged for the future between 'em when the noble girl was snatched away from us."

"Excuse my old friend for his flattery, sir," said Albert, aroused from his hesitancy by the importance of the subject. "If she is to be found, let me go."

"But you had better take some one with you."

"Simon Peter is here," declared Mr. Drake, starting up in his chair.

Albert gazed up into the honest fellow's face, and then cast an inquiring glance upon Mr. King.

"I think you had better take him," the farmer said. "In case of trouble, he would be better than myself."

"I apprehend no trouble," remarked the sailor. "If Rosalind is where I think she is, she must be held there on compulsion. Just let the people know that an officer will be called if they refuse you, and they will not hold out. You may wonder why I didn't go there at once instead of coming here; but I tell you again, I have very good reasons for it; and chief among those reasons is this: The girl don't know me—I am rough-looking—a total stranger—and she might distrust me. She must have been lied to and deceived till she would not dare to trust any one whom she did not know. So, if she should refuse to go with me, and I had to leave her, her keepers might hide her away before I could get back with her friends. But with you it will be different. She will not only know and trust you, but if you have to call an officer, it can be done so quickly that no opportunity will be given for escape. But there will be no such trouble. The man who has her now is paid for keeping her—he must be, for he can have no other interest. There can be no trouble."

"Of course there can be no danger of stumbling against the authority of her uncle?" suggested Mr. King.

"Her uncle?"

"Mr. Gondam, I mean."

"Ah—yes," returned the sailor, with a suggestive nod. "He was her guardian—made so by her poor old grandfather—but I think he'll hardly dare to make his appearance in any kind of opposition to you. I don't think you'll see him at all."

"And if we do I reckon I'll put his pipe out darned quick!" said Simon Peter, with a significant nod of the head. "Jest let him show his cussed pictur to me—that's all! Let him show it!"

"I'll trust you," returned Peters.

"Now where is she?" asked Albert.

"You will go to-night, then?"

"Of course. It's only a few minutes past sundown. We can drive the old horse to Boston in half an hour."

"Good!" uttered the sailor, with zeal. "I like that. She is with a pawnbroker named Michael Ludder. Here is the street and number,—I have followed Gondam to the place, and watched upon his track until I am sure."

As he spoke he handed a card to Albert; and, while Simon went out to harness a fresh horse, some further explanations were given. The team was at the door in a very short time, and when Albert had taken his seat in the wagon, with Simon by his side, he drove away at a swift pace.

When the rattle of the wheels could be heard no longer the family returned to the kitchen. After supper John Peters entered into a free conversation, and told of the many curious things he had seen in distant countries. His manner was frank and generous, and his sympathies were keen and rightly turned. The old farmer and his wife, and the interested daughters, very soon learned to love him.

"It seems just as though I'd known him for years," said Mr. King, after he and his wife had retired.

"So it seems to me," returned the woman. "But still there's something strange about him. Who is he? Why don't he tell us? What is he to Rosalind? What is he to Thomas Gondam?"

"Tut, tut, wife,—he's told us enough. You shouldn't go to letting your suspicions work in that way."

"They ain't suspicions, Aaron."

"Curiosity, eh?"

"Call it what you've a mind to," said the good wife, somewhat petulantly. "But I'll bet you think he's a curious man. I'll warrant you see something strange in him, and would give all your old shoes to find out all about him. Come, now!"

"Nonsense, Mary!"

"There!" cried Mrs. King, triumphantly. "Didn't I know it? Don't you always say, '*Nonsense, Mary*' when I've cornered you? I declare I'd like to know——"

"Pooh! Nonsense!"

"And so would you, Aaron King,—and you can't deny it. Come, now!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BROKER IS IN A VICE.

A single oil lamp was burning upon the table in the little back room leading from the pawnbroker's office, and by it sat Thomas Gondam and Michael Ludder. They had been conversing some time, and had now come to a pause because they were upon a delicate subject. Gondam's eyes were cast down, and the other was gazing fixedly upon him.

"It must be done, and at once, too," finally spoke the visitor.

"I'm sure I have no objections," returned Ludder. And he spoke the truth, for he was himself anxious to have the same thing done, though he was not quite prepared to own it.

"She must leave here as soon as possible," pursued the broker, unable to conceal his anxiety.

"I'm sure I wouldn't keep her one minute after you say she *must* go," replied Ludder, giving his companion a curious look.

"I didn't think you would, Michael."

"You ought to know I wouldn't."

"But," said Gondam, hitching uneasily in his chair, "I suppose our arrangements are all understood?"

"What arrangements?"

"Why—you know."

"I'm sure I can't imagine what you mean," replied the pawnbroker, with provoking honesty.

"Didn't I make arrangements with you for keeping the girl?" asked Gondam, somewhat testily.

"And haven't I kept her?" retorted Ludder, tartly.

"Yes—you have, and you know I have paid you as I agreed."

"For *keeping* her—yes," said the pawnbroker, with another of those sidelong, meaning glances.

"And now I want to take her away."

"But we never had any arrangement about that, you know." Michael looked very honest as he said this, and he seemed to want information on the subject.

"Arrangement about that?" repeated Gondam, in surprise. "Why—haven't I a right to take her when I please?"

"Of course you have, and haven't I told yo so?"

"But you seemed to intimate that something more was necessary."

"Can't ye see a hole through a twenty foot ladder, Tom Gondam?"

"Come, come, Ludder, explain yourself."

"Well," returned the pawnbroker, assuming the look which he generally wore when trading with a needy customer, "I don't care to beat around the bush, if you don't. But first, let us understand that there ain't no friendship in business."

"I ask none," said Gondam, wincing.

"Then here it is," resumed Ludder, with his forefinger pointing to where it appeared to be all written out on his palm: "I know you're makin' something handsome out of this thing. Now there's no gettin' around that."

"Not in money," interposed the broker.

"Ye needn't tell me that, Tom, for I know better. *I* know what Thomas Gondam 'll work for, and I know what he won't work for. He'll work for GOLD—— What makes ye start so?"

"Only the absurdity of your assumption," answered Gondam, feebly.

"They may sound absurd to you, but they don't to me; 'cause I know, ye see. But here it is: I've had a good deal of trouble with the girl. I've done for ye what ye couldn't do yerself. I've made a prison of my house, and me and Patty have had to lie like blazes. And I've run some risk, too. Good Lord! I wouldn't run such a risk again for all the money you've got—no, not if ye had as much gold as twenty men could carry, and had it all safe and snug in yer house, where I could get it in a minute. What's the matter with ye? What makes ye start so?"

"Nothing, only your confounded foolish nonsense about gold. Where should I get gold? I haven't got any!"

"I didn't say ye had. I was only supposin' ye had. But that ain't neither here nor there. If ye want to take the girl away, why, ye must——"

"Out with it."

"——pay me something. I know ye're able."

"This is strange talk, Michael."

"It may be to you, but it ain't to me. I say—ye must pay me something. Look at the trouble I've had, and the risk I've run, and——"

"Never mind that," interrupted Gondam, with a frown. "I hadn't expected this from you, Michael. I made you an offer to take the girl, and then paid you your own price. What more can you ask?"

"Look ye, Tom," said the pawnbroker, with a sharp, searching gaze, "there's villainy in this, and I've sold myself to help it on. That girl's one o' the most ill-used creturs I ever saw, and she's in trouble, too. I declare it makes me ache to see her, sometimes. When she fainted that Monday mornin', after I'd broke the murder to her, I swan it made me shudder to think how I'd helped abuse the poor thing."

"That'll all do very well to tell, Michael," said the broker, with a contemptuous look, "but it don't go down with me."

"You can't help ownin' up to the villainy part," suggested Ludder.

"Never mind whether I can or not."

"Well—I won't mind. But I say I've sold myself to it, and I've found it deeper than I expected. Now come down handsomely, and I'll give up the girl, and say no more about it."

"What! Do you mean to bleed me?"

"If I didn't know you'd got the blood to spare I'd be different; but, ye see, I *know*, so down ye come."

Thomas Gondam gazed into his companion's face for some moments without speaking. He knew he was in the pawnbroker's power, but how far would that power be used. With all the gold he had hidden away, he had gained no such thing as generosity. He could not spare a piece of the yellow metal if it could be avoided.

"You don't mean that, Michael," he finally said, imploringly.

"If I don't mean just that, then I don't mean anything," returned Ludder, with dogged determination. "You know me, and I know you. Now come down. This is business."

"Speak plainly. How much do you expect I could raise for you?"

"I don't know anything about that, though I've an idea of how much I want."

"Well—let's have it."

"Why—I've pondered the thing over in my mind, and there's just one figure runs in my head. I've slept over it, and dreamed over it, and thought of it when I was awake, and I've wondered if it was too little, but that one figure hangs. I can't get it out of my head any way. It's only a trifle—a trifle for you."

"Name it," said Gondam, snapping his fingers nervously upon the table.

"It's only a thousand—that's all."

"A thousand what?"

"Dollars," said the pawnbroker, with a cool glance.

"A thousand devils!"

"Just so, Tom. Gold is sometimes devils."

"Do you think I am made of gold? I haven't got any such sum."

"Then of course you can't pay it to me."

"You've hit it, Ludder. I can't do it."

"All right," returned Michael, beating a tattoo upon the table.

"I thought you'd come to your senses. I might make out fifty dollars, though."

"O—don't trouble yerself, Mr. Gondam. I couldn't think of takin' it."

"What d'ye mean?" cried the broker, with a show of apprehension.

"Why, I mean just *this*," replied Ludder, bringing his forefinger down upon the table with marked emphasis: "I'm poor—I've done some work—hard, thankless work—villainous work—and I KNOW you've made something handsome by it somehow. I've got the girl. Give me a thousand dollars, and you can take her when you want her. If you can't do it, perhaps there's them that can."

"Villain!" said Gondam, "would you turn traitor?"

"Don't say that word, Tom," urged Michael, without any show of feeling. "I wouldn't call you by that name."

"But you'd turn traitor, nevertheless!"

"I'd have a thousand dollars."

Thomas Gondam sank back upon his seat, and looked his companion in the eye, but the pawnbroker stared him out of countenance. He knew Ludder's character too well to suppose he would let go his grasp, now that he had made it so firmly. And he knew more. He knew that Ludder must be aware of the danger he (Gondam) would run from exposure, and that he would use that knowledge as a screw to his purpose.

"You are hard, Michael," he said, in a lower key.

"We're both of us hard, Tom," was the consoling response.

"But I mean you're hard on me."

"Any harder than you've been on others, eh?" Gondam winced.

"But we've been friends. I am not hard on my friends."

"Don't be a fool!" cried the pawnbroker, contemptuously. "Or, if *you* must be one, don't, for mercy's sake, think I am one. *Friends!* And where's been the friendship? Did you ever come here when ye hadn't business? Did ye ever seek me when ye hadn't some work for me to do—work that needed to be done in the dark? Haven't ye always come with the idea that I would do anything for money? Ye know ye have! And I will do a good many things for money—I have to live. I'd do a'most anything but murder. I hain't got quite black enough in my heart for that yet.— Eh! What's the matter?"

"Nothing."

"What makes ye start so?"

"What d'ye mean by talking so much about MURDER—and—GOLD?"

Michael Ludder started as though he had received an electric shock. Ah, Thomas, you shouldn't have asked that question! You were a fool! Sharp eyes are upon you, and a mind reads you that knows you well. You shouldn't have asked that question!

The pawnbroker turned away his head, as though something interested him in another quarter. He managed to calm himself, but there was a strange light dancing in his great, crooked eyes, and his fingers worked together, as though he had something between them which he could handle at pleasure!

"I didn't mean anything more'n common by what I said; and if I did, *you* needn't be worried. We're *friends*, ye know."

Gondam was seized with a tremulousness which he could not control, and the wicked gaze which met him when he looked into Ludder's face, did not tend to calm his agitation.

"Of course you couldn't have meant anything concerning me," he finally said, with an abortive attempt to appear unconcerned. "I didn't know, though, what strange ideas might have got into that crazy head of yours, for your demand would seem to imply that your brain wasn't far from being a little turned. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed the pawnbroker.

"You'll say five hundred, Michael."

"Just twice five hundred."

"Must you have that?"

"I must."

"Well—you're faithful to me, and I'll try to raise it somehow. I can borrow it, perhaps."

"No doubt. But when will you want the girl?"

"I don't know, exactly."

"Very well—any time will suit me. Ah—there's my supper-bell."

"You have supper late."

"'Tis late, but I s'pose Patty's been waitin' for me some time."

"Then I won't detain you any longer, but I'll see you again soon. When you spoke about murder, I was thinking of something I read in a book this forenoon. It kind o' startled me. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" echoed the pawnbroker.

"Good-night," said Gondam.

"Good-night," returned Ludder.

Thomas Gondam went away, and Michael watched him as a cat watches the mouse which she has caught and maimed, and then let run for play; and when he had disappeared the pawnbroker retired to the kitchen, leaving the doors open behind him, so that he might hear the tinkle of the bell in his office, if any one should enter.

Rosalind did not come down to supper. She came down to no meal now. A mortal fear was upon her, and she dared not leave her room!

"What makes ye look so funny, Michael?" asked Patty.

"Funny?" repeated the man, looking up. "What d'ye mean?"

"Why— Ye look as though somethin' was workin' on yer mind. What is it?"

"What should ye guess?"

"How can I guess?"

"I didn't know, seein' how quick yer eyes are, but yer wit was as good. But how is Rosalind? Have ye been up since dark?"

"Yes, I have, Michael; and I declare I pity the poor thing. I tell ye she can't stand it much longer. She'll go crazy. She don't hear a pin drop but she thinks it's an officer come to take her up for the murder."

"Well—she may not have to stand it much longer."

"And I tell ye she can't stand it, poor thing?" Patty spoke with real feeling, for her heart was touched. While the imprisoned girl had shown spirit, the woman had restrained her without remorse; but now that she was all broken down and humbled, and suffering continuous agony, the hostess felt her sympathies aroused.

"Don't be alarmed," said Ludder, lifting a piece of pie into his plate. "She won't be with us much longer. Her uncle will take her off."

"I hope he will," returned Patty.

A short silence ensued, and then the woman observed Michael's curious look again.

"What is it?" she asked. "What are ye thinkin' of?"

"I'll tell ye, Patty," replied the pawnbroker, with an expressive nod of the head. "But you'll keep it to yourself?"

"Never fear for me."

"Then— I've got Mr. Thomas Gondam under my thumb!"

"Eh?"

"Under my thumb," repeated Ludder, pressing that member upon the table as though he had the *broker at that moment beneath it.*

"But how?—What?" asked Patty, with her eyes opened to their fullest extent.

"Never mind. It's enough that I've got him—got him safely. If he's got gold, I'll have it!"

"But has he got gold?"

"He's got enough of it. Oh—I've got him! He's opened his soul to me without knowin' it. He thinks I'm a fool, but I know he's one. Oho, Thomas, me boy—we'll make a rattle among them money-bags of your'n!"

"Hark! There's the bell. Somebody is in the office," said Patty.

"And I'm just done in time," added the pawnbroker, starting from his chair, and hurrying out.

Albert Varrondale and Simon Peter Drake were waiting for him.

CHAPTER XV.

A FEARFUL ORDEAL!

"Good evening, gentlemen," said the pawnbroker, as he sidled in behind his counter, with a smirk and a grin. "Can I do anything for you this evening?"

"We don't wish to purchase anything," returned Albert, regarding the man before him with a certain gaze.

"Ah— Something to dispose of, eh? I ain't in want of anything just now; but still, to accommodate, I might possibly take *good* security."

"This is Michael Ludder, I presume?" the youth said, without seeming to notice the pawnbroker's disinterested offer.

"Yes. That's my name."

"Then you are just the man I want to see."

"Well—here I am, sir," returned Michael, a little uneasily.

"My business, sir, is concerning a girl whom you have here," pursued Albert.

The pawnbroker started, and turned pale, and his whole frame shook. That was enough for Albert. He knew he had hit the mark.

"A girl named Rosalind Hubert," he continued.

"There's no such girl here," asserted Ludder, quickly.

"What a lie!" cried Simon Peter.

"Be a little careful how you speak," returned the evil-eyed man, "or I'll show you the way to the door!"

"Oh—we found the way to yer door easy enough, so ye needn't trouble yerself, mister."

"And we have come for the girl," added Albert.

The pawnbroker regarded his visitors for a few moments in silence. He was frightened, but he managed to overcome the emotion so as to speak with considerable impudence.

"Who are ye?" he asked. "What d'ye mean by comin' here on such an errand?"

"We are friends of the girl, sir," replied our hero, gazing upon Ludder with a look of loathing; "and we are come to take her away from here. I hope you will give us as little trouble as possible."

"Well," uttered the rascal, with increased confidence, "this is a pretty go, I must say. Come here after a girl! What d'ye s'pose I've got to do with girls? I guess you'll have to look a bit further afore ye find what ye're in search of."

"We shall look no further until we have looked a little more thoroughly here," replied Albert, with some feeling. "We know Rosalind is here, and we must have her."

"You speak rather freely for a perfect stranger. I guess, though, you'll find yerself in warm work before ye hunt over this house."

"There ain't no use in foolin'," interposed Simon, turning towards his companion. "We know she's here, and if he wont show her to us, why, we know mighty well who will."

"We'll come to that in a moment," said Albert; and then turning to the pawnbroker, he added—

"You know our business, sir, and you will act wisely if you comply with my request. I give you warning that no power on earth can turn me from my purpose. Now lead me to the girl!"

"I tell you, there ain't no girl here," exclaimed Ludder, slightly startled by the youth's manner. "How can I lead ye to what I hain't got in the house?"

"Then you flatly refuse?"

"Refuse? Why—I can't do it, I tell ye."

"Then we'll contrive to find somebody that can. Simon, will you remain here while I go out?"

"In course I will."

"Then keep your eye on this man, and don't let him escape you. I'll have an officer here as quickly as possible."

"Look here, strangers—by ——! you're treading on dangerous ground," exclaimed Ludder, trembling with fear and anger both. "You'll find it a hot berth to stay here—now I tell ye!"

"Never mind me, Albert," said Simon. "Jest you go an' find the officer, an' ef this chap offers any nonsense, I'll show him somethin' that'll astonish him."

Ludder ran his eye over the gaunt, muscular frame of the farmer's man, and then he turned to the youth, who already had his hand upon the door-knob. Whatever may have been his thoughts, his resolution was quickly taken.

"Look here," he said, "Just you hold on one minute."

Albert turned back, and waited to hear what the fellow had to say.

"You've come upon a curious errand," resumed the pawnbroker, "and you put it to me rather tough. Now who are ye? What are you to the girl you're inquiring about?"

"We are her friends."

"But that ain't the thing. Where are ye from?"

"We are from the home where she has been reared. Aaron King sent us in."

"Why didn't ye say so in the first place? Now, ye see, the girl is here, but how am I to know who's her friends, and who ain't? She's had trouble enough already, without havin' them about her as has no business with her. She may be abed; but I'll go an' look; and if she is I'll send my wife up to speak to her. Who shall we tell her wants to se her?"

"Tell her, Simon Drake."

"Just wait here a few moments and I'll have it fixed."

"Shall we trust him?" whispered Simon.

"I guess there's no danger," returned Albert. "But we'll be after him if he's gone long."

Michael Ludder hurried out, and in the kitchen he seized a lamp.

"What's to pay now?" asked Patty, surprised by Michael's nervous movements.

"Never you mind. Just stay here and keep yer ears open. There's no danger." And with this he hurried from the room and sprang lightly up stairs.

Rosalind sat upon the side of her bed, with her hands folded upon her lap, and her head bowed. She was thin and pale almost to death. Her cheeks had fallen from their fair roundness; the blue veins were defined with a painful clearness upon the marble brow; and the large blue eyes had a half wild and half vacant look. Her door was opened without ceremony, and Michael Ludder entered.

"Rosa," he said, in a hurried uneasy tone, "you've got a terrible ordeal to pass. I meant to have kept from ye the fact that two officers had been here to-day to inquire for ye. They said they knew you did the murder, and they'd have ye at any rate. But I bluffed 'em off. Now, howsomever, there's come a messenger of a different sort, but one far more dangerous, unless ye've got a good resolution. It's a man from yer old home. Do ye know Simon Drake?"

"Simon!" gasped Rosalind, starting to her feet. "Oh! let me see him! Good, generous Simon!"

"But d'ye realize what a risk ye run? If ye should leave here they'd have ye apprehended in less than an hour. The sheriff's on the watch for ye. Now I want ye to see this man, but I don't want ye to expose yerself."

"Oh! I'll be careful. Let me see him!"

"But if he wants ye to go home with him, what'll ye tell him? 'Twon't do to confess the murder."

"I'll tell him nothing, only that I cannot go. Let me see him!"

"Well—I'll send him up. Mind, Rosa—if we can keep you hid away for a few days more we hope to find some escape for ye. We won't have ye hanged if we can help it. What a dreadful thing 'twould be to yer friends.—But ye feel strong enough to see him?"

"Yes—oh! yes—I am very strong, sir."

"It's here that ye'll need the strength," said Michael, laying his hand upon his heart, and casting a meaning glance upon the trembling girl.

Instinctively Rosalind pressed her hand upon her own heart, and a low moan of pain escaped her as she replied—

"I am resolved, sir. You need not fear that I shall cast such a cloud upon the souls of my friends. Let him come now."

With this the pawnbroker went away.

Since that fatal night Rosalind had been treated by Ludder and Patty very differently from the former treatment she had received. They had seemed eager to help her, and their sympathies had been freely poured out in consolation and condolement. In the frankness of her heart she believed them sincere. She believed that her terrible misfortune had moved them thus. Her spirit was crushed and broken, and the awful terror which had fallen upon her completely whelmed her soul. She was no more her former self. The weight of a great crime had bowed her down, and she felt the mark of Cain upon her brow!

There were foot-steps upon the stairs—the steps of two persons. At the landing one stopped, and the other advanced. The door opened—she gazed up, and saw—Albert! Her head swam—things grew faint before her—and with a low cry she sank upon her lover's bosom.

"Rosa! dear, dear Rosa! look up. It is I—it is Albert—your Albert. Oh! look up."

The poor girl raised her face, and a groan of anguish burst from the youth's soul.

"Merciful heaven!" he ejaculated, as he saw how ghastly she was, "what have they done? Are you sick? Are you faint? Rosa! dear, dear Rosa! what is it!"

"Oh, Albert, I have been very unhappy: I have been sick. But—I am better now. Oh, yes, much better."

"And we'll soon have you well, darling!" the youth cried, pressing the loved form more closely to his bosom. I have come to take you home. They'll nurse you there."

"HOME!" whispered Rosalind, with a start.

"Rosalind—look up at me," said Albert, his face changing to an ashen hue. "You know me? You are not——"

He stopped, for as Rosalind lifted her face, there was such a look of anguish upon it that his speech failed him.

"Albert," she said, in a cold, unnatural, shivering tone, "you think I am bereft of reason; but I am not. I know you well. I—I—— Let me lay my head here once more!"

She pillowed her head upon his bosom, and sobbed from her broken, bleeding heart.

"Come, come," urged Albert, "we will not stay here. You shall tell me all when we get home. Your sorrows are at an end, love. We have proved the perfidy of Thomas Gondam. You are free now. Come—they can harm you no more."

Rosalind removed herself from Albert's embrace, and sank down upon the edge of the bed. Then she bowed her head upon her hands, and remained so for some moments. Finally she arose to her feet, and gazed into her lover's face. All the agony was there still, but a frozen look had overspread her features, and she seemed more rigid than before.

"Albert," she said, in a tone that sent a shock of terror to her hearer's heart, "I cannot go with you. Oh! God bless you for all your goodness; but—I cannot go."

"Rosalind," cried the youth, starting forward, but checking himself as he met her imploring look, "what freak of wildness is this? Do you not understand that I have the power to set you free?"

"Ah, Albert—you have not the power——"

"But I have! I tell you you can go from this place with me even now—at this moment."

"Don't! don't! Oh, my God! you know not what power is over me. I cannot go! I would if I could. I love you—love you as fondly as ever. In all the world I love only you as you would be loved; and through all my life my heart is yours. When I die my last prayer shall be for your good! But I cannot—oh, I cannot—go with you now!"

"Rosrlind, speak to me! Don't look so! What has happened? You do not know what you say. I am Albert!"

"Ah, my beloved, you think my mind is turned," said the maiden; "but you mistake me. Would to God that it was so."

"Then what is this mystery? Speak—tell me!" And the youth folded her in his embrace once more. "Come—look up. What mean you, Rosalind? Why can you not go with me?"

"Oh! in God's name, Albert, I implore you ask me no more. There is a barrier between us! I cannot go. I cannot leave this place. My head aches—my heart is broken. Have pity—oh, have pity!"

Pale, trembling, and terror-stricken, Albert Varrondale started back and gazed into the face of the being he so fondly loved.

"Rosalind," he whispered, as if afraid of his own voice, "I must not give way to the weakness which has come over you. You cannot know what you say. Come to my heart—come back to my love—come to the old home, where all is bright and pure, and where fond ones await you. Come back and hear the birds sing upon the hillside—come and win back your bloom amid the——"

"Stop!" groaned the girl, sinking back upon the bed again, and clasping her hands upon her brow. "Come—you will go with me, Rosa?"

"Oh, have mercy!" she cried, extending her folded hands towards him. "Every word you speak strikes like a dagger to my heart! I cannot go; and I cannot tell you why. If you love me, ask me no more now. At some time, when you see me again, I may be more calm. Oh, God have mercy on me! Pity me, Albert! Spare me!"

"But one word, Rosa," the youth uttered, seizing her hand. "You will yet be my wife?"

Rosalind gasped for breath, and quickly drew her hand away.

"Albert," she finally said, in a tone so hollow and unnatural that it seemed to come from some far-off place, "spare me even from that pledge! Let us be as we were before. For your own good—for your own peace—for your honor, your name, your reputation, I ask this!"

"And you would give me back my love?"

"No, no, no!—not that? Oh! if you could see my heart—if you could see how it is all crushed and broken—you would not speak thus. If I could give you back your love—if I could make you forget that you loved such as me—I should suffer less! Here—thus—thus!" the frantic girl cried, catching Albert's hand to her lips and kissing it. "So give I once more a passage to my love! And now—now—now—Oh! my God!—FAREWELL!"

She threw herself upon the bed as she ceased speaking, and having buried her face in the pillow she sobbed aloud. Albert gazed upon her like one in a fearful dream. He called her name, but she did not answer. He advanced towards the bed, but he stopped as the last word she had uttered rang in his ears and sank wearily upon his heart.

"Rosalind! Rosalind!" he cried, in tones of deepest anguish, "God guard thee till the morrow?"

He then advanced, and bent over her prostrate form; and having imprinted a kiss upon her bared cheek, he turned away and left the room. At the foot of the stairs he met the pawnbroker; but he did not speak with him—he dared not trust himself—he might kill the black villain if he allowed the flame that was raging within his soul to burst forth. He knew nothing, as yet, of what that man had done—he had not dared to ask—he had feared the answer would make him mad.

"Albert!" cried Simon Peter, with a terrified look into the youth's death-like face—"is she dead?"

"Ask me nothing here!" gasped Albert. "Ask me nothing anywhere! Come!"

"But what is it?" urged Simon, after they had gained the street.

"Back to Mr. King's!" exclaimed the youth, in quick, husky tones. "That sailor may have some power. I'm sure he has! He alone, of all the men on earth, may open her heart. Oh! now for a drive, Simon!"

"Somethin' dreadful has happened, Mr. Varrondale?"

"I don't know."

"They haint——"

Drake caught a glimpse of his companion's face, by the light of a street lamp, at that moment, and he dared ask no more. Perhaps he knew as much then as did the man who groaned so heavily at his side.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

A FIGURE.

We have seen a child screaming, hitting his mother with fist and foot, spitting at her, calling her names, and afflicting her in every way in his power; and all because she was trying to drag him back from that which would have caused his death.

This scene was a figure—reader, can you tell of what?

Thus it is, only with more than a mother's love, that One tries to hold man back from his own destruction; and such return as the child made to his mother does man make to his truest lover and friend.

SMALL MORALITIES.

BY GEORGIANNA HERBERT.

There's many a man who would not all at once rob his fellow of all that he owns, yet would remorselessly do it by sixpences and shillings.

There's many a woman who would not cut her neighbor's flesh, who will yet stab her to the heart by a tongue thrust at her character.

There's many a man that would not, in words, cheat and deceive any woman, who will yet do so most cruelly, most fatally, by manner, look and act.

And there's many a *woman* who will do the same.

There's many a person who would not ill-treat strangers or visitors, who will neglect, and in ten thousand ways impose upon, those that love him—the more sure he is of that love the more bold are his impositions. Execrable!

There's many a person who does all larger things upon principle, but goes alone by impulse in the smaller (which are often the more important) matters of life.

There's many a person who would'nt for anything neglect scripture reading, prayer, church-going, or even alms-giving, who will whine, and fret, and growl, all day long, rendering everybody about them uncomfortable.

There are many persons who will talk with tears in their eyes of the love of God, who never deny themselves for pure, unreflecting love of their enemies, or hardly for their friends. Whatever they *do* do for one is done with careful explanations of how kind it is.

There's many a person who would shudder at robbing a man, or at desecrating a grave-yard, who will rob God, or desecrate his Sabbath.

There's many a person who will watch lest his child play upon the Sabbath hours, who will yet go and aid *a whole school* of children to do what helps to fasten the doom of Sabbath labor upon the working man.

There's many a man as just as Aristides to all beyond his own family circle, but who is more unjust than the veriest tyrant to all within.

There's many a woman who if one of her fellow-creatures were to give favors to her child would never requite him ill, who will yet encourage that child to take *God's* favors to disobey and abuse him with.

There's many a person that reads, meditates, and sings most devoutly, by the hour together, who yet hugs the abject snake of selfishness and the cruel asp of hatred in constant embrace.

There's many a person who tries to be religious, but never tries to be noble-minded, tolerant, polite, agreeable, and *always clean* from head to foot.

There's many a person who aims to be ever *true*, but who forgets to be always *kind*.

Many a man whose honor in large affairs is worthy of praise, who in the small, unexpected matters of each day has no honor at all.

The trouble is people *will* cheat themselves into feeling that God cares only for important and noticeable acts. They have a very vivid conception of how that All-seeing eye would flame upon them were they in the act of some outrageous sin; but that it actually is just as attentively upon every look and word that passes between man and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, friend and friend—that it watches narrowly how we do *every little* act, and what motive prompted this deed, or what remark *this*—is the thing about which two-thirds of Christians even are infidels. But does not He, who numbers the very *hairs of our head*, observe each thought and motive of our hearts? Yes, surely. Remember, then, to be always right and noble in the *little* things, and you will never go wrong in the greater. The man or woman who runs a line of principle through that part of life which is least in dignity and importance, will be in no danger of being unprincipled in the higher walks thereof. Do *everything* as if you saw who sees *you*. You'll *soon* see Him. Prepare!

BOARDING-SCHOOL EDUCATION.

The corner-stone of education is discipline; on it the future character is founded, and from it is derived that elevation and tone which infallibly recommends the subject of it to the esteem of the virtuous, and the attention of the wise. Discipline is indeed frowned upon in the present day; hence some of our boarding-schools are sunk to the level of boarding-houses—the school is lost sight of. But all that is excellent in education has its source and spring in discipline: mark the youth who has not felt its influence—he is overbearing, conceited and vain—miserable in himself, and a source of misery to others—a spoiled child, who, to be pleased, must be flattered, and who seeks, in personal gratification, a substitute for personal worth. But turn from this sad picture, and ask the man whose name stands high to what he owes his reputation. He attributes it to discipline; perhaps he will tell you that a good mother impressed, with unwearied solicitude, sound principles on his mind, and enforced, while in years he was yet tender, habits of obedience; and, when the reins of authority were becoming weak in her hands, she confided them to the schoolmaster, who took them up, and guided, with equal assiduity, the unfolding of his moral and intellectual character. It is in vain to expect any other than that *a child left to itself will be a shame to its mother*. Man is so constituted that he requires something to be done, in his early years, to give a direction and bias to his pursuits. If this be neglected, the habits that will grow up with him, and the principles that will correspond with his habits, and which he will inevitably adopt, will not operate to the good of society or his own happiness. Discipline commands the will, corrects the disposition, and subdues the passions; it rescues the mind from debasing influence, and opens the way to eminence, in the possession of a decidedly manly, moral character. Discipline is the antidote to idleness, the corrector of vice.

But what is discipline, this agent that is to effect so much? Is it tyranny and oppression? Has it no other rule or principle of action than moroseness, severity and ill-temper? Does it drive the scholar to a distance from his tutor? No; it is not tyranny; it does not make the scholar tremble at the presence of his master; it is not oppression. Its origin and influence are in affection; without kindness there is no beneficial authority. Be a father to your scholars, and they will love you. Kindness robs a youth of his worst propensities, petulance and deceit; disarm him of these weapons, and you may indeed lead him as a child; he will be satisfied with your authority and receive your advice. Such discipline betters the heart. By kindness I do not mean indulgence, or a conformity to your pupil's will and inclinations, but *the expression of affection in the discharge of your duty.* Let them see that their welfare, their happiness and respectability are what you ardently desire and endeavor to promote, and they will respect you more, and be much happier under your government, although you sometimes chide and correct them, than by any compromise of duty. Your pupils are not ignorant of the requirements of your office, and they will honor you only as you discharge them well.

VALHALLA.

BY WILLIE E. PABOR

I've read in Scandinavian lore
Of that blest place on that far shore
Where heroes rest forevermore.

The final battle has been won,
The weary round of work is done,
The race for precedence been run;

They lay their heavy armor down,
They change their helmet for a crown,—
Uncertain fear for sure renown.

And there are those who, keeping time
To weird notes wed to runic rhyme,
Welcome each hero with a chime.

Within Valhalla's blessed walls
They taste the kiss that never palls,
And find repose in Odin's halls.

And I have read in sacred lore
Of lands that lay beyond Time's shore,
Where Life's true heroes fight no more.

There harps and crowns await the brave,
Who while in life sure token gave
Of faith that look'd beyond the grave.

They sing new songs unheard before,
In rhymes unknown in mortal lore,
And only sung on that blest shore.

They were true heroes when on earth,
Although they were of humble birth,
And seemed, perchance, of little worth.

But they had fought the Christian's fight,
Had conquered wrong by righteous might,
And through the darkness reached the light.

And when they laid their armor down,
Their faith secured a sure renown,
And with the Cross they won the Crown.

THE BANISHED SON.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

Bessie and Mary Armitage were known as the prettiest girls in Stratford. They were the daughters of a wealthy widow, whose handsome mansion, embosomed in trees that in summer almost hid its white walls, stood on the aristocratic side of the village green. By the aristocratic side, I mean that which was adorned by the church and parsonage, the dwellings of the lawyer and doctor, and of one or two retired city merchants, and which, in short, was considered most desirable by the village magnates.

Mrs. Armitage was a proud, handsome woman, stern in manner, and with the most rigid ideas of social and religious duties, of decorum, of household government, of everything in fact, that pertained to the management of her daily life. Mistress of a large fortune, and an elegant mansion, she prided herself upon the equitable system by which she managed all her various interests. Her word was law in her household, she neither sought nor accepted advice, but sternly expected all who came within the sphere of her influence, to bend to her will.

Her husband had been a quiet, yielding man, a frequent invalid, and too indolent, from habit and disposition, to retain in his own hands the reins of government. Mrs. Armitage had ruled during his life, not only his house and fortune, but, it was shrewdly suspected, himself. It was generally supposed that she had dictated the terms of the will which, with the exception of small legacies to his three children and one or two ancient dependents of the family, with somewhat larger ones to various benevolent objects, bequeathed to her the entire bulk of Mr. Armitage's fortune, to be by her absolutely controlled.

Somehow it got whispered about that Mr. Armitage had wished to leave a large portion of his property, principally real estate, to his son, but that he had been overruled by the lady, who was not willing to see the power of managing and dispensing wealth pass from her hands. He had, however, exacted a promise from her, on his death-bed, that she would see all his children well provided for, and she had answered, somewhat sternly, that they were her children as well as his, and she thought she could be trusted to do justice by them all. That much she would promise, she added, in a softer tone, as the unmistakeable death-shadow gathered over the wan face that to her had ever worn a gentle expression, and the meek spirit passed away soon after the words were spoken.

Years had passed since that hour The little girls, who, with awe-struck faces, stood beside their father's bedside, were now grown tall handsome young ladies They lived alone with their mother in the family mansion, received the best society of the village, and had the house occasionally filled with the friends they had made at school, or during their visits to the city

But they were always under their mother's direct supervision She ordered their dresses and conduct now just as she had done in their childhood, generally making all purchases for them, and never yet had made to either any separate allowance. The income of their small legacies she regularly paid them, but even that they could not expend without her permission, save at the risk of giving offence, which was shown by a stern coolness of manner, that effectually sent the offender to a domestic coventry.

The sisters were very different, both in appearance and disposition. Mary, the elder, was tall, with a figure almost too full in its majestic proportions to suit her youth. In person she strikingly resembled her mother, and no less so in disposition, it was affirmed by those who knew her best. She had the same dark, flashing eye, and jetty hair, the same clear, olive tint on brow and cheek, the same red lips, between which the white teeth were wont to gleam with a smile that was neither genial nor kindly, and her imperious manner and proud step seemed copied from the parent she so greatly resembled. No doubt she chafed beneath the discipline to which her proud spirit was subjected, but there was no appeal from that tireless, quiet, domestic tyranny.

Bessie was her sister's counterpart. The gossips said "she favored her father." She, too, was tall, but her figure was delicate and slight, and still girlish, even after she had reached the age of eighteen. An exquisitely fair complexion, which showed too little of the bloom of health, long rippling curls of pale brown; soft, dove-like eyes of serenest blue; a rosy, small mouth, and small white teeth; cheeks the nestling places of dimples that lurked in ambush for her frequent smiles; a kindly, genial manner, a little timid and flustered at times, as though she had learned to fear the spontaneous display of natural feeling, a something sweet and winning that brought all hearts to her service—such was Bessie Armitage, in the fresh beauty of her youth.

Mrs. Armitage and Mary met with much respectful attention, the elder lady with deference, they commanded it—but for Bessie was love, a gift bestowed from the spontaneity of the hearts of all who looked upon her. A lovely Una, she might have wandered through the world's wide wilderness unharmed.

But gentle, though powerful, as was Bessie's influence abroad, at home she was a nullity. Neither mother nor sister understood her, their powerful wills overrode her gentleness. Their Pharisaical piety, exact in every outward requirement, had little fellowship with that silent dedication of life, and life's powers and faculties, to the service of God, which Bessie had long since made in the sincerity and humility of her heart.

Bessie was very lonely in her home. Her mother was exact in the distribution of all external appointments. The sisters occupied separate rooms, each furnished precisely like the other, their wardrobes were purchased at equal expense, and all things were meted out to them with the equal justice on which Mrs. Armitage prided herself.

To a stranger the position of the sisters in their mother's house would have seemed precisely the same. He would not have seen the quiet sneer with which all Bessie's little enthusiasms were put down, how entirely her delicate perceptions of truth were crushed under the burden of Mrs. Armitage's favorite dogmas, how her fine, poetical intellect failed of appreciation or pabulum in her home. Outwardly she was a timid, quiet girl, who, unlike the brilliant Mary, did scant justice to the excellent advantages of such a home, and such society as her mother's house afforded her.

To the mere observer all was fair and prosperous within the Armitage mansion. Great wealth, personal advantages of the highest order, a name long descended, and not without its renown in the commonwealth, belonged to Mrs. Armitage. Two beautiful daughters sat beside her hearth, and by their youthful presence made sunshine within the otherwise gloomy precincts of her great house. The world's esteem was hers, though there were daring souls who sometimes whispered mysterious tales of wrong against her; she was still in the proud prime of life, her stately beauty scarce impaired; she stood high in the church to which she belonged, and of which Mary was also a communicant, though Bessie still delayed the public profession of the religion which her daily life showed to be an abiding principle, ever inciting her to good words and works, with the humility that made her shrink from unworthily claiming the privileges of membership with the "peculiar people."

And yet there was a shadow upon the heart and life of this proud, stern woman—the shadow of a broken vow, of a great and terrible wrong. There was a vacant place at her table and by her fireside, an empty chamber which no one entered, a forbidden utterance of one name in that household, that should have sounded daily on all lips.

Robert Armitage had left his mother's house at fourteen, and for ten years no tidings of his existence or his welfare had reached her ears. To the few to whom, even in the early days of his absence, she had mentioned it, she had always justified the conduct that drove him from the roof that should have been his own, and made him a wanderer and an outcast.

She never spoke of the unnecessary severity of his discipline, of the constant thwarting of his boyish impulses, the fierce struggle for the subjugation of a will scarcely less imperious than her own, the bitter accusations met by firm denials, the disgraceful punishment inflicted without investigation into the truth of charges afterwards ascertained to be false, but still justified to herself by the plea of the boy's want of respect and submission to her authority. She never mentioned him at all, save during the days of suspense and vain search that followed his flight, in the darkness of the night, from the chamber where he had been confined on prison fare for several days, with the vain determination of extorting from him an acknowledgment of his imputed crime.

The search had proved useless, and then, with its abandonment, Mrs. Armitage had prohibited the mention of his name. His chamber—the chamber of his imprisonment—was closed, his plate removed from the table, his seat from the fireside, all his toys, and the miscellaneous lumber that such a lad accumulates, together with his clothes, were packed away in the large garret, and thenceforth in his home all went on as if he were dead—laid to his last rest beneath the sod, instead of wandering alone over the face of the pitiless earth. But the terrible consciousness of wrong doing, though unacknowledged even to herself, pursued Mrs. Armitage, embittering all her life.

She knew that she had broken the spirit of the promise made by that solemn death-bed. She had not "done justice" by her son, though, with all the miserable tricks of sophistry, she strove to find justification for the wrong.

To all outward appearance the name of Robert, as well as his memory, rested in the oblivion to which his mother's will would have consigned them. But Bessie, who had been the great boy's little pet and playmate, could not so easily forget him. He was the one of all the family who had called out her affection, and never spurned it; he had loved her, and she had returned that love with all the intensity of her loving nature. She had long sorrowed for him in silence; and now, though the wound had ceased to bleed, it was not, and never could be, wholly healed.

She it was who, at stated periods, stole away to the garret to examine and re-arrange Robert's toys, and to take carefully out of the huge chest his ancient clothing, and hang it upon the rude beams and rafters to air, shedding many a tear over her task of love, and fondly lingering to recall in memory how the brave, handsome lad had looked in the various suits which, tarnished and faded, now swung idly in the breeze that stole in at the open windows.

She had never dared to confide to Mary her purpose, for that young lady was wont to resort to Mrs. Armitage with tales of Bessie's eccentricities, but usually took the opportunity of the absence of her mother and sister for her work. And sometimes she would claim the assistance of Dimmis Riggs, who had been a servant in the family before Master Robert's birth, as the good creature would say, wiping the tears from her eyes meanwhile with the corner of her checked apron, and then the two would hold long whispered communications about the absent one, so fondly remembered by both, and utter many a heartfelt prayer for his safe and speedy return. Little knew these simple souls the fierce, vengeful feeling, the bitter, unforgiving hatred, that kept the wanderer from his home.

Unhappy in her home, and longing ever for the absent one, Bessie strove to fill the void in her heart by a life of active benevolence. She had little to give save time, and that she gave freely, since her mother, on whom the luster of her good deeds reflected, offered no hindrance, though she expressed no interest.

An unprofessed Sister of Mercy, Bessie was found in every house in Stratford, where sorrow, want or pain had found entrance. Her mission was to cheer, to console, to alleviate, and well did she perform it. The blessing of those that "were ready to perish" attended her footsteps constantly, and eyes and voices alike attested the gratitude of those to whom she had been the truest of friends.

Bessie had one aged pensioner to whom she went weekly, carrying in her basket something to supply the old woman's temporal needs, and the Bible from which she was wont to read, in her sweet, clear tones, those passages best fitted to minister to the spiritual necessities of her hearer. This ancient woman lived quite in the outskirts of the parish, at the distance of nearly two miles from Stratford, and Mrs. Armitage had often urged Bessie to go to her so early in the day, as to be able always to reach home before nightfall. Bessie had readily promised to do so, and on the only occasion on which she had been belated, had been accompanied home by the old woman's daughter, herself a stout, middle-aged woman, who lived with and had the care of her aged parent.

Early one autumn afternoon, Bessie set out on her weekly visit to grandma Benton. With her little basket upon her arm, and murmuring snatches of songs, and half recalled fragments of delicious poetry, she passed along the lonely country road, and arrived at her destination before she was aware that she had passed over half the distance, so absorbed had she been in the lovely scenery, so invigorated by the fresh autumn air, and mellow autumn sunshine. A great sense, as of a crowning joy, filled her heart, she was blithe and happy as a bird, and the pensive expression of her sweet face was lost in the radiance of that wonderful premonition.

It remained with her all the time that, sitting by grandma Benton's bedside, she read to her the blessed words that the old woman so loved to hear, and when the lecture was finished, and Bessie had said farewell, and had gone out to the kitchen, she was not surprised at the look of mystery on Hepsey Benton's face. Something was coming—something pleasant, she knew—and she was, therefore, no more surprised when Hepsey whispered that "somebody in there wanted to speak to her," opening the door and pushing her into the little parlor, than if, all the time, she had known some friend was waiting to see her.

A tall, manly figure almost darkened the little window as she entered, but turned as the slight rustle of her dress and the closing of the door caught his ear.

He came forward with hands outstretched. His face, so brown and bearded, was the face of a stranger, but the voice—deepened as were its tones, that uttered that simple word—

"Bessie!"

—there was no mistaking that, and with a great cry of joy, Bessie fell upon that manly breast, felt the strong arms close round her slight form, and knew that, at last, Robert had come home.

The shadows of night were falling before that long, happy interview ended. Then Bessie started up in affright, for the first time remembering her promise to her mother, and the long road that lay between her and home.

"You will come with me, Robert," she said. "Surely you will come to see our mother and Mary?"

Robert's brow, that had been so bright, darkened.

"No, Bessie," he answered, "I cannot enter those doors again. When my mother inflicted that last undeserved punishment upon me, she sentenced me to bread and water and solitary confinement for one week, for not confessing a crime of which I was not guilty, and assured me that if, at the end of that time, I had not confessed it, I should quit the house forever, and no longer be acknowledged as her son. I chose to go, voluntarily, and never will I seek admittance beneath the roof which should have been my own, and beneath which I received the bitterest humiliation, and endured the most galling tyranny."

"But, Robert, she is our mother; surely you can forget the past, for the sake of the love that tended your infancy."

"Never! Bessie. What did she ever do for me unless for her own pleasure? She is no mother of mine. But I am keeping you, and will walk with you until I can leave you safely in sight of home. My mother must not know of this visit. You say my name is a forbidden word in the household. So much the better. You will not be likely, then, unless my mother is less imperious than of old, to mention having seen me."

"But Robert——" began Bessie. in a faltering voice.

"Not a word more, darling, on this subject," the brother answered; and as they passed along the quiet road, he began to talk of the foreign lands he had visited, the Old World wonders he had seen; and Bessie forgot, in her delight of hearing, to utter further remonstrance.

The brother and sister parted beneath the elms that overhung the churchyard wall, and Robert, lost amidst their deep shadows, watched his sister till she entered the well-known gate. Then he turned and strode silently away into the darkness, in the direction of the farm-house where he had for a few weeks taken lodgings, under the name by which he was known in the distant city which was now his home.

Of course Bessie was scolded for her tardy return, but for once the maternal rebuke fell unheeded upon her ear. The radiance of her new joy, that beamed from her face, could hardly have passed unheeded, but that Mrs. Armitage and Mary were discussing a projected visit to the city, and so had little thought for Bessie. She sat apparently occupied with a book, but in reality full of happy thought, until the hour of retiring arrived, and she could escape to her room.

The weeks of Robert's stay passed swiftly away. The absence of her mother and sister left Bessie much at liberty, and thus she was able to meet her brother, somewhere, every day. Beneath his mother's roof no entreaties could induce him to come; and so Bessie, guileless as a child, strolled with him along the quiet roads, by the stream, and in the woodland, or met him at grandma Benton's, utterly unconscious that the tongue of gossip was busy with her name. And Robert, whose knowledge of the world should have prepared him for this, thoughtless of the dangers into which he was leading his innocent young sister—careless of all things but his deep delight in his renewed association—followed only the bent of his feelings, and enjoyed his little day of happiness to the utmost. Before Mrs. Armitage came home he had returned to the city, having forbidden Bessie to write to him until he should first give her leave. Bessie promised obedience, promised to keep his secret, and parted from him sorrowfully, and yet in the hope of another meeting when a few short months had passed.

On the third day after Mrs. Armitage's return, Bessie was summoned, by her sister, to her mother's private room. Something portentous in Mary's aspect warned her that she must prepare for reproaches—but for the scene that awaited her she could have had no preparation. The village gossip had reached the ears of Mrs. Armitage, and she poured upon her shrinking child the fierce torrent of her wrath. Bessie was frightened, but firm. She gave the name of the gentleman with whom she had been in company so frequently, Robert's assumed name, Raymond Armstrong, but refused to enter into any particulars of their acquaintance. "Was he a lover?" Mrs. Armitage inquired. "Had Bessie presumed to enter into any engagement without her knowledge?" Bessie disclaimed any such purpose in the acquaintanceship. "So much the worse," her mother replied, "for now your disgrace is unmistakable."

With furious reproaches she ordered Bessie to her room, and having turned the key upon her, left her there a close prisoner.

Space would fail to enumerate all the trials of Bessie's life, for the weeks that followed. Taunted as a wanton by her mother, forbidden the privilege of a word with her sister, or any visitor at the house, condemned to utter solitude, she yet preserved her brother's secret, and suffered no intimation of his visit to escape. She had promised, and her promise was sacred.

At length she fell sick. For a time she lay dangerously ill, and it was no longer possible to preserve around her, the utter isolation which Mrs. Armitage had devised, as the fittest punishment for her contumacy.

It was during this illness that Hepsey Benton paid a visit to the bedside of her young friend. A few chance words of Bessie's and a whispered conversation with Dimmis Riggs, during this visit, enlightened this shrewd, though homely woman, as to the causes of Bessie's illness. All the way home she meditated on what she had heard, and long before she arrived had come to the conclusion, that if she but knew where to address a letter to "that Raymond Armstrong," and could bring him to Stratford, all would be well again. She had her own shrewd suspicions as to his identity, but she argued, "if he'd wanted it known he could have told of it, himself, and it's not for me to do it till I have liberty. Anyhow," she concluded, "he's got to come here, and make all straight, or that dear child will die. That old woman's a-killing her as fast as ever she can."

It will be seen that Hepsey was not without her prejudices, kindly as was her nature.

Luckily she remembered a card that Raymond had once dropped upon her parlor floor, and which she had laid aside, but forgotton to return to him. It might enlighten her as to where he was to be addressed, and she resolved to search for it.

It was easily found, and gave his name and also the name and address of the firm of which he was a member. With infinite difficulty Hepsey, for she was no scholar, penned the letter which bore to Robert Armitage the tidings of the suspicions to which his reckless conduct had subjected his sister, hinted to him the trials which she had endured, and told him how she now lay sick unto death, but still preserved his secret.

Within four days this letter was in Robert Armitage's hands, and scarce an hour afterward he was traveling, by a swift train, toward Stratford, full of remorseful impatience. To reach his sister's side, to set her right in the eyes of her little world, to avow the entire wrong of that sweet clandestine intercourse, to save and snatch her from that uncongenial home, was his purpose.

With his usual impetuosity he went straight to his mother's house, the instant he arrived in Stratford. The hall-door lay open, but there was no person visible; so walking in, and turning to the right and left in vain search through the remembered rooms, he at length ascended the staircase, and, guided by the sound of voices, entered Bessie's room. A group—his mother, Mary, the physician, and Dimmis Riggs—surrounded the bed where Bessie lay like a pale withered flower. In a distant corner, Hepsey Benton bent over a stand at which she was preparing a draught for the sick girl. For an instant Robert stood unobserved, and then at some slight noise Bessie's eyes turned thitherward and rested upon him. With a cry of joy she stretched out her waisted arms, and in another instant Robert was kneeling by her side, and she had fallen back fainting upon her pillow.

All rushed to the side of the fainting girl—all save Mrs. Armitage, and she confronted the intruder, with her stateliest aspect.

"What means this strange intrusion?" she inquired. "You are, I conclude, the person who has brought all this shame and sorrow upon our house. Tell me who you are, and for what purpose you have come to look upon the sorrow you have caused, and upon your victim—and then begone."

Robert met her stern, proud gaze as sternly and proudly, but as he gazed his eye faltered and softened. Only one word he spoke, and then hearts, so long estranged, overleaped the barriers of pride and vengeance, and were once more at peace.

"Mother."

That was all, but it was enough. Mother and son fell into each other's arms. Murmured words of endearment followed, half-spoken acknowledgements, and prayers for forgiveness, sobs, and tears raining from proud eyes, sweet words of reconciliation—then peace.

Robert was at home again, home in his father's halls, home in the heart where pride had not stifled the sweet, tender mother-love, home in the affection of Bessie, the proud satisfaction of Mary. Bessie's trials had not been vain. She had come purely through the furnace of affliction, and, through her sufferings, had compassed the reunion of those she most dearly loved.

Henceforth the sceptre departed from Mrs. Armitage. Anxious for her son's return, she offered, at once, to transfer to him the landed property and the family mansion, which his father had designed should be his. Yielding to her importunities, he came home, and once more took up his residence in the house where his childhood had been passed. Both proud natures were effectually softened, and henceforth the strife between them was only which should outdo the other in generosity. Then for the first—Bessie's qualities of mind and heart met their just appreciation. Robert's adoring love for his sister opened his mother's eyes, and she admitted to her softened heart the child on whom, until then, she had bestowed but little affection.

When, shortly after, Mary married and left home, the three remaining members of the family continued to reside there and for several years enjoyed almost uninterrupted happiness. Then Bessie married the young village pastor, and transferred her residence to the adjoining parsonage; and shortly afterward Robert brought home a wife, of whom the villagers used to say, as a voucher for her amiability, and of Mrs. Armitage's improved character as well, that there were never any discords in the old mansion. And how better can we express the change that had taken place in that proud, imperious woman, than by saying that she willingly resigned the domestic sceptre into the hands of the new mistress of the mansion, and betook herself to aiding Bessie in those charitable employments, which were still the great pleasure of that excellent young woman's life?

A SIGN AS IS A SIGN.

We think bad spellers will have little difficulty in understanding the following sign, which was taken from a store door in a commercial town in California:

PHOR SAIL HEAR.

Boot & Shoez, Molassz, Winnegar, Pork & Beens, candels, pipes, tin kittles, orsturs, clams, bare skins, sider, brandy, wood, tobakker, hats, capps, nutmegs, pertarters, & other tin wear; besides a lot of other things witch aint menshined hear.

PHEED

PHOR SAIL HEAR IN ENNY QUONTITY BY THE QUORT.

GETTING ACQUAINTED.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

Very dissimilar are the appearances which people present to you from different points of approach.

Go into a town, a church, or a family, as a poor stranger, for whom no one particularly cares, and after staying a year or two in that character, depart, and when you are forgotten there (which will be in a few months), return in the character of a rich man's son or daughter; or as a person of literary (or some other) note, and observe the changed faces and actions of all.

They do not seem to possess the same dispositions that they before exhibited. Countenances that before looked grim and hard, when your eyes rested on them, are now softened with smiles of cordiality at your approach. Everybody is ready to bow to you, to talk to you, to introduce you; you are not allowed to pine in loneliness, but are encouraged to enter freely into the most agreeable society there is to be found.

You are hardly able to believe that these are really the very same people who before passed you by as worthy of no other notice than to request you to wait upon their wants or their whims. You are, perhaps, tempted to refer to those days, and to inquire what has wrought the change; but you do not like to be disagreeable, and therefore you keep silence. But all the time you think, think, think; and when, perchance, you come across one who, when you were sick and weary, having, as was supposed, no shelter for your friendless head, treated you most cruelly, and find that he now makes it a point to play the devoted to you, and that he glories in the self-bestowed title of "your old friend," and declares, before all the company, when you are so *happy* as to meet, that if there is "a person on earth" whose friendship he values, "*you* are that person," you are mute with amazement at the ways of the world; but you *think* more deeply than ever. And the sum of your thought is this: "Hollow, hollow, hollow," and "How selfish and far from what they should be, are the best of men. Who would live alway in such a world?"

But suppose that you enter, with neither the disadvatages of poverty, nor the prestige of riches, a town in which you are a perfect stranger, but which you desire to make your home.

Having, in the place from whence you came, been generally liked; having even been not destitute of admirers and warm lovers and friends; knowing that you possessed a spirit of hearty goodwill towards all your fellow-creatures, and having always been assured that your face was a luminous one, revealing your disposition, you know no reason why you should fail of taking the same stand in your new home that was freely accorded you in your old. You regard the inhabitants of the present town very much as you did those of the town you have left, and you are willing to recieve them into the same relationships to yourself that former townsmen maintained, and why should not they be as friendly towards you?

You begin your good-natured advances, reasoning that it is hardly sensible to expect the whole country to rise up and make acquaintance with you; you proceed to show to such persons as you are thrown in contact with, that you are desirous (if you *are*) of their friendship. *Now* comes the experience.

Some receive you as frankly as you offer. Many, *on knowing that you are there and a stranger*, make haste to show you some attention and regard. But others draw back, and give you a look which seems to say, "Who are *you*, that you presume thus?"

Another tells you that your "knowledge of the world is very small." You begin to believe it, but not from the reason *he* was considering.

He thinks you lack this knowledge because you dare speak just as freely to a man who has been praised by other men—to one who has been far better in some respects, and far worse in others, than *you* have been, as to any other. His reason is a perfectly foolish one, founded in vanity and capped by conceit. How *should* the lips which have a right to speak freely unto the God of Heaven fear to address any mortal man?

You are thrust off from one whose intercourse you had perhaps ardently craved; you find that you have made wrong estimates, and while you are meditating thereupon, you are unexpectedly taken up and petted to your heart's content in quarters to which you would never have dreamed of aspiring. Not because you were not *good* enough company for them—you don't admit that, you believe that an upright and honorable man, or woman, one in whose heart and conduct are the true love and courtesy of the gospel, is fit company for kings, priests, and angels—(it would be strange if such an one were not so, seeing he is "a child of God")—but then you hadn't supposed that *those* people, standing so high in the ranks of earthly honor and wealth, would have any thoughts to spare for a stranger like yourself. You had supposed these more wanting in magnanimity, more *spoiled* by the favor of the world, than those other "great" Dust Images, who proved that they were, as far as you are concerned, "touch-me-nots."

Thus you are disappointed and surprised on all sides. Nothing turns out as you expected; you are more slighted and more noticed than you ever dreamed that you could be. But by-and-by you get used to being astonished, and you start and stare no more. You find out the people, and the people find out you; those whose friendship you need become your friends, and those who repulsed you, and continue to walk loftily, you cease to care for, except to feel sorry that they are not more like Him whose name they profess to honor. You have measured and gauged the community; you have become acquainted, have settled down, and are at home.

And when once the *home*-feeling is established in you, cold glances and upturned noses, be they never so lordly in station or name, are but things to laugh at, though almost any one has power, by their means, to wound "the *stranger's* heart."

LANGUAGES.

The least learned are aware that there are many languages in the world, but the actual number is probably far beyond the dreams of ordinary people. The geographer, Balbi, enumerates eight hundred and sixty which are entitled to be considered as distinct languages, and five thousand which may be regarded as dialects. Adelung, another modern writer on this subject, reckons up 3064 languages and dialects existing, and which have existed. Even after we have allowed either of these as the number of languages we must acknowledge the existence of almost infinite minor diversities; for, in almost every country, we see that every province has a tongue more or less peculiar, and this we may well believe to be the case throughout the world at large. It is said there are little islands, lying close together, in the South Sea, the inhabitants of which do not understand each other. Of the 860 distinct languages enumerated by Balbi, 53 belong to Europe, 114 to Africa, 153 to Asia, 423 to America, and 117 to Oceania, by which term he distinguishes the vast number of islands stretching between Hindostan and South America.

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ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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ASSASSINATION.

Assassination is one of the most detestible of crimes. To meet an enemy openly, and slay him in mortal combat, is far enough from the divine that is supposed to temper—often extremely latently—our common humanity; but to prowl secretly on the track of murder; to carry purposes of death in broad day-light among the unsuspecting, in one's heart, with a poniard under the doublet, a bowie-knife in the shoulder-sheath, or a grenade in the hand, to smite some one at unawares, this is the foulest work to which the wits of man were ever put. Under whatever guise—whether "Thugs," "Assassins of the Mountain," or Italian bravoes, hireable at any street-corner in Venice, Naples, or Rome, to do murder for a pittance, the whole class are accursed under the statutes of Christianity, and of every decent civilization.

Yet, though detested, in ancient times as now, there has been more or less resort in every age to this atrocious method of revenging, avenging, and putting obnoxious persons out of the way. Lovers have assassinated their rivals; Statesmen have not overlooked the stiletto as a means of advancement; Kings have been as little scrupulous as any, to work their purposes by the process; warriors have stained their knightly crests by "stabs in the dark;" the priest in his cloister has consulted this cold-blooded remedy; and even woman, has not been free from the assassin's brand. But no secret blow, not even that of Brutus, has ever redeemed the assassin's trade. All right-minded persons, whatever the circumstances, must feel a horror of this species of murder.

Still, if we allow ourselves a little casuistry in pleading, we can easily point out exigences when none but the secretly armed hand can seem potent *to work a great desired result—a result, perchance,* fraught with vast final good, though effected at the sacrifice of Christian principles and civilized prejudices. It is not seldom—or, at least, it has not been, in the past—that tyrants and oppressors so hedge themselves about with defences against the resistance and rage of justly incensed peoples, that redress can only come from under the conspirator's robe. The spirit of revolution, crushed down to its last, despairing resort, flies to the dagger, which it would otherwise have scorned. This very exigence has been often the nurse of conspiracy, and the inspirer of assassination. Many and many a palace and fortress could attest that the tyrant courted the secret steel that pierced his heart. Nevertheless, even such assassinations are representative of a savage, rather than a civilized spirit in man.

As to the recent attempt to destroy the sovereign of France, it cannot be justified even by casuistry. Admitting the wrongs and infamies charged upon Louis Napoleon, there is no proof that the French people desired, or would have been benefited by his murder. The attempt was that of aliens, with grievances as much imaginary as real, and who laid themselves open to the condemnation of all laws worthy of civilized life. Yet, Louis Napoleon ought to be the very last to complain of treasons, conspiracies, and murders—of whatever sort—for of all eminent living men, he has set most examples in these very directions. A membership in the "Carbonari" made him of old a sworn conspirator; his attempts against the throne and peace of France occupied years of his life—his conspirations being on foreign (English and Swiss) soil; while his acts of treason (if breaking faith and oaths to France be that) are too many to require specification. He should be thankful that he has so far and well escaped the natural fruit of his own examples.

THE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT.

It has not unfrequently been the case that revivals have run the boundaries of some one sect, or some section of the country, but never before have the whole people, of all sects and without regard to sect, even, been thus stirred up—and that, too, without any of the ranting and fanaticism which have so often provoked the sneers of the world and profaned the name of religion. It is doubtful if Christendom has ever presented a similar wide-spread, calm and pure awakening on this subject, either in or out of the church. We only hope that this serious spirit—never inconsistent with any and every rational enjoyment—may continue with our people, and spread over all the earth. Surely praying is better than cursing, and humility becomes us perishable beings better than pride. Before such a spirit of the age, war, oppression, injustice, and want would soon perish.

BANK DEFALCATIONS.

Is it not strange that a bank officer, as in a case recently brought to light in this city, can go on defrauding the institution for ten or fifteen years without exciting suspicion? That a bookkeeper should thus be allowed to swindle a bank out of nearly one hundred and fifty thousand dollars is really astounding, and shakes one's faith in the intelligence and capacity of all the officers of the institution. Who would care to invest money in bank stock, when such flagrant inattention to their duties is exhibited by those on whom the solvency and the success of the bank mainly depend? The officers of our banks must pay less attention to their "refreshments" and outside speculations, and devote more time to the discharge of those duties for which they pay themselves such liberal salaries, if they would retain the confidence of the community.

DEATH.

Universal as is death, no familiarity with the grim phantom can quench its inspiration of human horror. Of itself, it is altogether forbidding and ugly; cold, silent and terrible. An intruder and a robber, it steals upon our busy hours and upon our solitudes, and plucks down our peace and joy, giving us darkness for light, and a fountain of bitterness for the sweet waters of life. More because of death than of all things else, "man was made to mourn"—for of all things, death most teaches man his mortality, his brotherhood, and touches the spring of his love, his sympathy and his sorrow. Yet there are those who affect that to them death brings no shock, no grief. Hedged about by fanciful consolations—born of savage stoicism rather than of generous humanity—they mock at the bereavements of death. They cry out in their pride and self-sufficiency—alas! how feeble when comes the inevitable hour—"Why mourn? Is not death the common doom?—we all must die."

That argument, true in fact, is a poor, scant pittance for present, complaining grief. It resolves the emotions of nature into the stoicism of art; it may congeal the tear, but it cannot dislodge it from the heart. The bruised reed may return by tension to its place, but the harm lies firmly indented on its side. We are mortal in our sympathies as in our strength; we have not yet come to wrestle with fate, and laugh at its severest blow; nor, bound to the rock, can we smile with Promethean power, while the vulture hangs heavy upon our vitals. If there was aught to love in life, there is something to mourn in death; if presence was beautiful, absence is not. The clouds cause us to murmur while they float over the sun, the flowers shadow our souls in being frosted, and the droop of verdure on the hill-side, with the flight of summer birds, fills us with spontaneous regret. Are our "dearer idols of affection," that have taken form and splendor from contact and "close communion" with us, less lovely than sunshine, the violets, "dewy grass," and the voices of birds?

Speak out, moaning heart, thou art right in thy human utterance against calamitous death. He has obscured a radiance, to thee brighter than the sun's, trampled a flower that paled the rose, withdrawn a verdure that no "tears for dew" can restore, and hushed a voice sweeter to our ears than all the leafy rustle of the woods. Death will not relax, nor give back his strong hold. For consolation we must fly to faith. Our eyes must baffle this dim haze, and fly to other worlds. If the birds return singing when the winter has flown—if the flowers smile out in the reviving spring, and the brooks leap under the laughing sun, with renewed life, surely the soul of man shall burst the bands of death, and live again, eternal and immortal.

A SOCIAL RARITY.

Beautiful is frankness! Its habitual use gives transparency to the character, and lustre to the whole life.

And yet behold how rare a quality it is. Deception is the order of the day. It enters into all the affairs of life—into the work-shop, the counting-room, the court-room, and, in brief, everywhere. As to business concerns, it notoriously enters so extensively into them, that modern traffic has come to be regarded as a huge practical lie. We do not pretend to say that this verdict is deserved. But there is sufficient truth in the charge to justify our assertion as to a general want of frankness, if not that of Falstaff, that the world is "given to lying."

So uncommon, indeed, is candor, that the exhibitors of it are seldom taken at their word. A striking example is recorded of the famous Spanish General Spinola. When he passed through France, in 1604, he was invited to partake of the hospitality of Henry IV. The king asked him on the occasion what plan of operations against the Dutch, in his contemplated campaign, he had resolved upon. Spinola coolly and quietly explained the whole of his programme to the king. The latter, who was in the interest of the Dutch, immediately wrote a letter to the Prince of Orange, in which he communicated all that his guest had stated. But at the same time he advised the prince to put no faith in it, giving it as his opinion that Spinola, whose confidence he knew he had not previously secured, would never have disclosed his real plans. But he *had* done so, after all, and he fulfilled every word he had spoken in the execution of the plans of his campaign!

Spinola, when questioned as to his reasons for such a statement, replied that frankness was so rare, that he knew the treacherous king would not believe him. The comment which Henry IV. made upon this "sell," as it would now be called, has a valuable lesson in it: "Others," said he, "deceive me with falsehood, but Spinola has deceived me with the truth!"

SELF-RELIANCE.

It is a good thing to advise with experienced and true friends—especially when we are young and inexperienced—or to take counsel, which is the same process. Solomon said, in a multitude of counselors there is safety. According to which, the more trustworthy friends we counsel with, the better.

And yet advice-seeking may become a great evil. It often has so proven, to the sorrow of the seekers. It is apt to degenerate into a weakness. Then it gives evidence of want of self-reliance—indeed, that the seeker of the opinions of others has no opinion of his own—"no mind of his own," as the popular phrase runs. Self-reliance strengthens the mind, and renders it more and more reliable for individual guidance in the path of safety, duty, or prosperity. From which it follows that self-reliance is, after all, safer for mental health, and success in human action, as a general rule, than advice-taking.

The fact is, advice-taking, in the common acceptance of the phrase, is a fool's habit. We mean doing so and so, upon the mere word of so-and so, without consideration. And such is the habit of those who accept the exhortation, "take my advice," as the highest evidence of wisdom in the adviser, and of real friendship as well. Alas! how often such have discovered their mistake when it was too late!

It was among the wise sayings of that wise man, Benjamin Franklin, that "we may give advice, but we cannot give conduct," meaning that self-conduct in which certainty of right action is alone to be attained, and to which one of the most philosophical writers of the day has given his sanction with the exclamation, "Welcome, evermore, to gods and men, is the self-relying man!"

Until there are fewer false friends and flatterers around us, who seek to discover the desire of the advice-seeker, only to further it as such, advice will prove an *ignis fatuus* to those who go in search of it continually, as so many weak-minded and over-credulous people do, to their ruin.

The greatest misfortune of life is old age without the remembrance of virtue.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

THE BABY IN THE CAR.

There is nothing in nature more curious than the gravity of a little baby. That self-poised, dignified, thoughtful calmness, which you may try in vain to outstare, or disturb. So I thought the other day, as I sat in the cars, looking, as if for a wager, into a pair of baby eyes, that were scrutenizing me with infantile persistence and imperturbability. I might have looked forever. No calling up a blush on that pearl-white skin; no flinching in that calm, quiet eye; limpid as a lake, serene as a seraph.

Of what was the baby thinking?

Not, I am sure, of the delicate lace which fell like a gauzy cloud about its sweet face; nor of its French, embroidered cap, lined with the softest silk; nor of its dainty cloak, tied by mamma's own soft, white fingers, and redolent of the delicate perfume of her handkerchiefs and laces. Not of all this was the petted baby thinking; nor yet of the smart nursery-maid, who drew it fearfully away from the little Irish baby on the knee of her stout neighbor, as if the breath from out its saucy little Hibernian nose were contamination, and its calico frock, and cotten hood, and faded cloak, were the livery of shame as well as poverty. No; else had not those baby features worn that calm majesty, which leaves us with infancy, and only meets us again at the tomb, and which the most sin-scarred creature who ever defaced God's image quails before, as if God himself were looking into his secret soul.

August babyhood! Majestic yet helpless! Imploring yet awing us! Who shall say what wild thoughts of sin thy voiceless eloquence has calmed down to repentant tears! Who shall number the souls washed white by the unconscious touch of thy sinless hand, or make mention of the swift-winged prayers breathed over thee; or tell of the mortal throes with which she who gave thee birth watches thy little lamp of life fade out in utter darkness! And who but the angels see the cords, invisible to human eyes, with which from the spirit land thou drawest after thee the mother, who for her falling tears can scarce trace thy tiny footsteps, and yet, groping and stumbling, follows the good shepherd, who looks lovingly back, as he hides her lamb in his bosom. FANNY FERN.

TO MY LITTLE LEDGER FRIENDS.

I want to say a few words to the *little children* who write me such nice letters.

Some of you live in and about New York, some at a great distance from it. I should be very glad, had I time, to write each of you a long letter—indeed, many long letters; but how is this possible if I "make some more books for you," as you all request me to do. One cannot write a book as fast as one can read it through; perhaps you do not think of that. Besides, I must write every week for Mr. Bonner, who does so much to make your firesides cheerful and happy. Then I have a great many other calls upon my time, of which you know nothing. Like your own mamma, I have children. They sometimes say, "Oh, do throw away that tiresome pen, and talk to us." And then I say, "Yes, presently." But still I have to keep on writing. Then, you know, if I only used my head, and never my feet, my head would not last long. I must exercise a great deal every day, else I should fly up the chimney, or through the roof, like a witch. But for all that I don't forget one little girl or boy who ever wrote to me; and although I cannot answer, it always pleases me to hear from you. I want you all to believe this, and write me whenever you feel like it. FANNY FERN.

IF YOU HAVE A HOME, STAY THERE!

O, yes! If you have a home in the country, stay there. By no means permit yourself to be lured away to the city, in hopes of advancing your condition. Be contented where you are. Although what you may read or hear of a city life is pleasing to your understanding, and you already imagine yourself here in the full enjoyment of the happiness that seems to be in store for you in the gay metropolis, heed it not. Turn a deaf ear to the tempter, and stay at home, where rural quiet and well-meaning people surround you, instead of venturing amidst the thousands of wicked men and women that swarm here. This huge city is already overrun with adventurers, who monopolize whatever employment is to be had, and who otherwise destroy the chances of persons just from the interior to obtain support. If a merchant or other employer advertises for a person to assist in his establishment, he immediately has applicants by the hundred, all ready and anxious for any kind of employment, no matter how small may be the salary. For every casual job there are twenty, perhaps fifty, or even a hundred needy operatives ready to jump. And of the thousands who are fortunate enough to have permanent places, not one quarter receive anything like fair wages for their labor. We do not allude to those who have good trades and valuable professions; we mean such as make themselves "generally useful," as it is termed—such as are obliged to do whatever kind of work they can get. It is this class of operatives who, all their life-time, on an average do little better than starve. So beware, young man or young woman, how you leave a home in the country to try living in the city. You know not what it is to abide in a city like this, without a sincere adviser or friend to guide you aright and help you to procure employment. You have never known what it is to mingle with three quarters of a million of people from every quarter of the globe, who are all making money when and as they can (not one of whom will even salute you with a word of encouragement or a kind look), day after day, until your small means are entirely exhausted, and yourself a penniless, houseless stranger. Neither do you understand how hundreds of young people come here from the country honest, and who are so lucky as to get employment for a time, are led on step by step, by strong temptations, until they end their days in a prison, or on the scaffold—or die in the most wretched suffering and want—outcasts from the world. We could go on and write a large volume in argument against trusting yourselves to the uncertainties of city life, while you are blessed with a home, relatives, or true friends in the country. If you can live anywhere, it is in the country, where your wants will be few, and your happiness nearer complete.

☞ If we do not aspire to admiration, we shall fall into contempt.

Never was a truer sentiment uttered; and yet many people are fond of indulging in invectives against the evils of ambition. What would any of us be without ambition? Mere drones.

I HAVE cleaned my mirror, and, fixing my eyes on it, I perceive so many defects in myself, that I easily forgive those of others.

HONESTY IN MERCANTILE LIFE.

MR. ROBERT BONNER.—*Dear Sir*—I have been very busy since the receipt of your note, consequently you will excuse me for not answering it before.

* * * * * * * *

Your paper continually teaches that "honesty is the best policy," but so far as acquiring wealth in mercantile business is concerned, I am satisfied it is a false doctrine. You will find very few strictly honest and truthful men who are successful. Such men are always too trustful, rendering themselves the victims of every liar and sharper. The clerk, who is the greatest adept in deception, always sells the most goods, and secures the largest salary. He soon obtains a partnership in some wealthy house, or his extensive acquaintance enables him to build up a large business.

However, you know I believe in a "good time coming," when honest men only will be successful, and which will last longer than life, therefore I choose rather to be honest and run the risk. Respectfully yours, ——— ———.

The above is a private letter that we received one day last week from one of our down-town merchants. We have taken the liberty of publishing it, omitting the name. The writer we firmly believe to be a purely honest and upright man; but, like a young lady "crossed in love," he is evidently soured with the world; or, rather, it would seem from the tone of his letter that he has not met with the same degree of success which has attended "liars" and "sharpers;" and therefore he comes to the conclusion that the old adage of "honesty is the best policy" is *false!* Not so fast, friend. Don't condemn a good old maxim like that, too hastily. It may be true that you have not transacted so large or so profitable a business as some of your less scrupulous neighbors; but has it not occurred to you that the ill-gotten gain may be snatched out of their fingers as suddenly as it was accumulated? Do you suppose that the blessing of the All-Wise will rest upon them and their thousands? Do you not know that, in the words of the "sweet singer of Israel"—

"A little that a just man hath
Is more and better far
Than is the wealth of many such
As false and wicked are?"

You have a long life yet before you, (if you should live to a good old age,) and although your profits may be moderate now, still for aught you know they may keep on gradually increasing and multiplying until they will even amount to as much as those of the hypocritical scoundrels who will put their "consciences" into their pockets and "counterfeit" the character of honest men.

We grieve that our friend should call in question the *policy* even of acting honestly in mercantile life. His logic is somewhat at fault. He says:

"You will find very few strictly honest and truthful men who are successful. Such men are always too trustful, rendering themselves the victims of every liar and sharper."

We can't exactly agree with this. It does not necessarily follow that an *honest* man must be too *trustful*. An honest man should understand his business as well as a "sharper;" indeed, he should be even more careful and cautious.

It is gratifying, however, to know that our friend is determined "*to be honest and run the risk.*" He need not have told us that. We think we know him too well to suppose for a moment that he would deviate from the paths of rectitude and honesty. Let him only persevere in his own straightforward course, and he will one day become convinced that "honesty *is* the best policy," and that the LEDGER has *not* propagated false doctrine.

GIFT ENTERPRISE SWINDLES BROKEN UP.

Our readers will recollet that several weeks since we exposed an impudent attempt made by "C. E. Todd & Co., of 392 Broome street," to pass off a forged puff, purporting to be by the LEDGER, of their "gift enterprise," as a genuine indorsement by us of their swindling concern. Many country editors complained of us for thus publicly rebuking and exposing these adventurers, and attempted to offset our damaging statement by extravagant puffs in their own journals of "C. E. Todd & Co." Within a short time, however, the Mayor of this city has placed this matter beyond dispute, by arresting the parties who operated under the name of "C. E. Todd & Co.," seizing their bogus "gold pens, chains and watches," and their letters containing hundreds of dollars from deluded victims, and holding the principal to bail in the sum of one thousand dollars.

Sergeant Berney, of the Mayor's Police, who had charge of this affair, managed the business with such consummate skill as completely to break up the whole swindling concern, and utterly crush the "gift enterprise of C. E. Todd & Co., 392 Broome st." at a blow. There are many other similar concerns in this city, which Sergeant Berney has got track of and will soon break up. An extensive swindle of the same order was not long since exploded in New Orleans, after the public had been defrauded to the extent of some $20,000, and we hear of others still in various cities of the Union. The only safe course for parties to pursue is not to send money to any one who advertises "gift enterprises," or anything of the sort.

AN AMERICAN MONARCHY.

Some of our broken-down politicians, and many of our scheming, characterless Catalines, have commenced agitating the subject of turning our Republic, or a part of it, into a monarchy. They are "disgusted with the people;" they "have no faith in the people;" "the people are incapable of elevation;" these, and all the changes that can be rung upon the false idea of the "people's incapacity," are the stock in trade of these unfledged monarchists. The truth is, these ambitious adventurers see that the mass of the people are too wise to be imposed upon and too honest to be bribed, and hence their enmity against and affected disgust of them. They fear the people, and hence would reduce them to subjection. But this they can never do. The great, lion-hearted masses of this country can never be overridden by suckling monarchists. The despot's yoke can never be imposed upon their necks. *Forever*

"The star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

GALLANTRY.

There is not half the gallantry of manners there used to be some fifty years ago. Now, a gentleman only lifts his hat to a lady—then, the hat was entirely removed from the head, and the gentleman stood before her uncovered. Now, the gentleman takes a smack from her ruby lips, and hardly looks red in the face. Then, he struggled for the "smack," and never drew a long breath for half an hour after. Then, he kneeled gracefully to tie up her loose shoe-string. Now, she puts her foot into his lap, and he ties the string, with a gape, and releases the foot without any ecstacy, or even a tight squeeze. We are growing barbarous!

☞ The Peoria (Ill.) *Republican* states that a gentleman who had been for some time paying his addresses to a young lady, asked her hand in marriage, which was refused. He pleaded for some time after, and declared if she still resisted his suit he would commit suicide. She informed him such an alternative would not influence her in the least. At this he loaded a gun, and standing in front of the house, placed the muzzle in his mouth, and with his toe pulled the trigger. The lady stood at the door and witnessed the whole transaction.

We think that the result conclusively proved that the young girl was right in refusing such a simpleton. The man who would blow his brains out, simply because a girl refused to "have him" is not fit to be a husband.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

WOMEN, who imagine their influence to depend upon their personal attractions, naturally wish to preserve their youth. And it is in their power to do so, for she who captivates the heart and the understanding never grows old. But, as men are generally estimated by their moral and intellectual recommendations—as a philosopher of fifty is preferred by all whose preference is worth having to a fool of twenty, there is something very contemptible in a male horror of age. So prevalent, however, is the feeling, that, with the exception of one individual, who has obtained an enviable immortality as "*Middle Age* Hallam," we have no chronology for men and women at or beyond the meridian of life.

AN antiquary is very likely to be a collector of valuables that are worth nothing, and a recollector of all that the world has been glad to forget. His choice specimens have become varieties simply because they were never worth preserving, and he attaches present importance to them in exact proportion to their former insignificance. When a worthy of this unworthy class was edifying the French academy with a detail of the comparative prices of commodities at various remote periods, La Fontaine remarked, "Our friend knows the value of everything but time."

To be angry is to punish ourselves for the fault of another; or to commit an additional error if we are incensed at our own mistakes. In either case, wrath may aggravate, but was never known to diminish our annoyance. "I wish," says Seneca, "that anger could always be exhausted when its first weapon is broken, and that, like the bees, that leave their stings in the wounds they make, we could inflict but a single injury." To a certain extent this wish is often fulfilled.

AN ignorant but well-meaning man having been placed on the commission of the peace in a rural district in New England, declared, on taking his seat as a magistrate, that it would, indeed, be his most anxious endeavor to do justice without fear, favor, or affection. "In short," said he, emphatically, "I will take care that on this bench I will never be either partial or impartial."

THE Rev. Sydney Smith, whilst preaching a charity sermon, frequently repeated the assertion that, of all nations, Englishmen were most distinguished for the love of their species. The collection proved inferior to his expectations; and he said that he had evidently made a mistake, for he should have said that they were distinguished for a love of their *specie*.

A BRIDE of some months finding herself one evening alone with her spouse, was attacked by a severe fit of yawning. "You are tired of being with me, I presume," he said, somewhat offended. "Not at all, my dear love," she replied; "but you and I are now but one; and, to say the truth, I always get stupid when I am alone."

WIT in an influential form was displayed by the Quaker gentleman soliciting subscriptions for a distressed widow, for whom everybody expressed the greatest sympathy. "Well," said he, "everybody declares he is sorry for her; I am truly sorry—I am sorry five dollars. How much art thou sorry, friend? and thou? and thou?"

A RIVER generally becomes narrower and more insignificant as we ascend to its source. The stream of ancestry, on the contrary, often vigorous, pure, and powerful at its fountian-head, usually becomes more feeble, shallow, and corrupt as it flows downwards.

THE ancients are dead bones often used for knocking down live flesh. People naturally give preference to old wine, old books, and an old friend, unless the latter appears in the form of an old joke, in which case he is not apt to be treated with much respect.

AN aurist was so remarkably clever, that having exercised his skill on a very deaf lady, who had been hitherto insensible to the nearest and loudest noises, she had the happiness next day of hearing from her husband in California.

AN editor, with whom we exchange, puffs the casks of an advertising patron as being the strongest that he ever saw. We doubt whether they are strong enough to hold liquor when he is about.

IT may seem a singular circumstance that, the warmer the weather was during the late remarkably mild months of December and January, the more the people's thoughts *ran upon ice*.

THE fellow who was content that his life should be linked with crime, has found a strong chain round his leg, and a pair of handcuffs upon his wrists.

"WILL you take an apple?" said a lady, extending to a gentleman a basket of pippins. "Thank you, I'll take a pair," said he, helping himself to two.

WE saw an admirably formed woman this morning. To be sure she was exceedingly short, but her diameter made fully up for the deficiency.

"I AM going to the post-office, Bob—shall I inquire for you?" "Well, yes, if you want to; but I don't think you'll find me there."

"MR. Conductor, are you running on time today?" "No, we are running for cash."

THE speaker who was "drawn out" measured eighteen inches more than before.

A MUFF is a thing that holds the softest hand without squeezing it.

CURRENT ITEMS.

CAPTAIN DUNHAM, of the barque Adriatic, who was so unjustly imprisoned at Marseilles, and his vessel confiscated by the French authorities, recently came into port, with his barque in good order, having escaped from the French prison, the French guardians of the port of Marseilles, and the French war vessels sent in pursuit of him. One Yankee skipper, with justice on his side, is a match for Louis Napoleon and his myrmidons at any time.

IT is said that over twenty-three hundred conversions were announced during a period of ten days at the various churches of this city. Some of the most hardened reprobates, and also many of the leading men of New York and Brooklyn, have professed themselves converts, and signified their intention of uniting with the church.

AN infant child of Mrs. Stephen Monaghan, of Ellsworth, Me., was left in the cradle while she went after a pail of water. When the mother returned she found, to her horror, that a stray pig had forced his way into the room, and eaten off two fingers from one hand of the child, and badly mangled another.

NOT long since a police officer of a town in New Hampshire arrested a number of boys for riding down one of the village streets on their hand-sleds, swore at them roundly, and had them fined one dollar each. The next day the boys had the policemen complained of and fined for profanity—a revenge which they enjoyed most keenly.

CHARLES MEYERS, being out of work and having been turned out of doors by his landlord on account of non-payment of the rent, a few nights since committed suicide by taking a dose of arsenic, in order to escape from his overwhelming troubles.

HENRY JAMESTEIN, a lager-bier brewer residing in Avenue B, came home drunk a few nights since, and laying himself down upon the bed where his infant child was sleeping, in his drunken stupor rolled upon the babe, and smothered and crushed it to death.

MAYOR TIEMAN and his energetic aids are making a tremendous stir among the gamesters, ticket swindlers, lottery and policy dealers, "gift enterprise" humbugs, and the villains generally who have so long infested this city.

THE Berlin (Prussia) papers say that since the arrival of the Princess Royal in that city, the opera dancers have been ordered by the police to elongate their skirts four inches.

IN one of the villages of the town of Simsbury, Conn., it is said there is not an adult person who remains unconverted since the influence of the great revival of religion, now sweeping over the country, reached that place.

THE "gift enterprises" in this city are being broken up by the Mayor, one after another. Persons living at a distance should be careful not to send money to any of these swindlers.

A SUIT for damages has just been decided in Ohio, giving a man one thousand two hundred dollars, whose leg was accidentally and severely cut by the scythe of a fellow-mower in 1854.

A HETERODOX clergyman recently said that he did not believe in the total depravity of human nature *before* he visited the State Assembly at Albany.

ELEVEN deaths have arisen in the United States since December last, from burning, occasioned by the wide-spreading of ladies' skirts and crinoline into the fire.

A MAN named William Samson was recently arrested in this city for biting his wife's arm severely, and attempting to place their babe upon a hot stove.

THE Supreme Court of Massachusetts has decided that lager-bier is intoxicating.

IT is said that seven hundred hens have fallen victims to the hen-stealing mania in Hyannis, Mass., during the past winter.

NELLIE.

BY ALICE CARY.

We told our poor sick Nellie,
To cheat from our hearts, the pain,
What plans we had made for happiness
When she should be well again.

We would play at "hide-and-seek," we said,
When they thrashed the great straw-stacks,
And the oxen wore golden saddles
Of chaff on their broad brown backs.

And when we gathered the apples,
We said; in the windy Fall,
Her nice white apron should be filled
With the reddest of them all.

And when we had a winter fire
In the garret, low and bare,
Why, she should have the warmest place,
And the painted rocking chair!

But the new frock, gay with ruffles
From her shrunken shoulders fell,
When we held her up and tied it,
As if it could make her well.

She never rocked in the painted chair,
Nor went to the stacks to play:
The grass has grown between her face
nd ours, this many a day.

RICHARD HOFFMAN;

OR,

THE PEASANT AND THE NOBLEMAN.

A TALE OF LOVE AND RETRIBUTION.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE TWIN VILLAINS PITTED AGAINST EACH OTHER.

Mr. Andrew Silex—who, since his return home, had laid aside his suit of black, till circumstances should again render a visit to London necessary, and donned his usual attire—was seated in the little oak-paneled room in the Home Farm, which served him for an office. Upon the table before him lay the rent-book, copies of leases, receipts, bills, and, in short, all the miscellaneous papers which belong to a large property, and the management of it.

The furniture, like the inmate, was exceedingly old-fashioned: half a dozen high-backed chairs, covered with faded brocade, which, in the days of Queen Anne or the first George, perhaps, had been in its freshest gloss—one or two cabinets, and a large iron safe of such massive construction, that it would require the united strength of half a dozen men merely to move it.

The lid of the last-named piece of furniture, if it might be called so, was open, and disclosed a miscellaneous collection of valuables: bags of coin, carefully sealed, papers labeled, and a variety of articles of plate, tarnished for want of use.

On the top of the chest was a parchment carefully folded; it had all the appearance of a will; this parchment the old man took up and read through once or twice, without uttering a word by way of comment. While thus occupied, his brother entered the room. So cat-like and stealthy were his footsteps, and so absorbed the attention of the reader, that the latter failed to perceive he was no longer alone; the intruder took a seat and regarded him attentively. The chair creaked as he sat on it, but even that failed to attract the attention of the steward.

"Twelve years more," murmured the old man, aloud, "and Allen Boothroyd's child would have been of age."

The convict noted every word he uttered.

"And on Sir Norman's death been entitled to half the estate. I don't see why I should content myself with less."

"Nor I," thought the intruder.

"Nor will I. I have earned it by my silence the long years I have waited for the enjoyment. What can Sir Norman or his wife object or complain of? Alice will be rich—too rich for a girl—and I spare them the ignominy of an exposure—of holding them up to the scorn of the world—screening them probably from the hand of justice. No, no; it must be half; not a penny less, I am resolved upon it."

"And quite right, too," exclaimed Mike, aloud.

His brother dropped the parchment hastily into the iron chest, and closed the lid before turning round to ascertain who it was who had dared to intrude upon his privacy; for it was an understood thing in the Home Farm, that when occupied in the oak room none should break in upon his privacy.

"Mike!"

"Andrew!"

Such were the exclamations which broke from the lips of the two brothers, who, having uttered them, stood for some time surveying each other in silence. The countenance of the steward expressed rage and mortification at being thus followed, as it were, to his lair. The features of the convict, on the contrary, denoted extreme triumph in having outwitted, as he considered, the prudent, cautious Andrew.

"You here!" exclaimed the former, after a pause.

"Yes. I told you I should find you out."

"You did," answered the steward, bitterly.

"And I have kept my promise."

"You have," muttered his brother, in the same tone.

"You see, Andrew," said his visitor, "after the loss of that blessed child, whom I took to as naturally as if it had been my own, I felt quite lonesome like in the old place in the Belvedere-road, it were so silent and solitary, especially at nights, when the wind howled round the chimney and gables, making low, moaning sounds, just as she used to do. The fact is, I could stand it no longer, so I sold the furniture—it didn't fetch me much, I promise you—and started to see you; couldn't keep away any longer."

"And what do you expect to find here?"

"A welcome," replied the convict, boldly, "such as I would have given you had you come to me; and," said Mike, "I am tired of living alone. We are brothers—henceforth let us be companions and pals."

"You are mistaken, then," said Mr. Andrew Silex, striking the table before him with his clenched hands. "This house is not mine. I have no home to share with you, and if I had——"

"You would refuse it?"

"Exactly."

"You think so," answered Mike, in a mocking tone; "you only think so. Your heart is better, much better than you give it credit for being. For in that case, I should forget that we are twin brothers, go to the nearest magistrate, and make oath that Andrew Silex, the steward of Sir Norman Boothroyd, came to me on a certain day, and made arrangements for my receiving the stolen child of Allen Boothroyd, the co-heiress of this estate here. Lady Boothroyd brought her to me, and agreed to pay me fifty pounds a year for keeping her, and five hundred in the event of her death."

"The daughter of Allen Boothroyd," repeated the steward, turning exceedingly pale.

Mike nodded in the affirmative.

"The co-heiress of this estate?"

"You said so yourself.

"This would lead to an investigation which neither you nor your mistress would come out of with clean hands," resumed the convict. "Child stealing is a serious offence, and ain't no more allowable in the rich than the poor."

"And where did you learn this pretty romantic story?" demanded the steward, trying to look unconcerned.

"Partly in the cottage from Simon Gee."

"You have seen him?"

"And spoken with him," replied his brother, "and partly from your own lips."

"And have you no fear?"

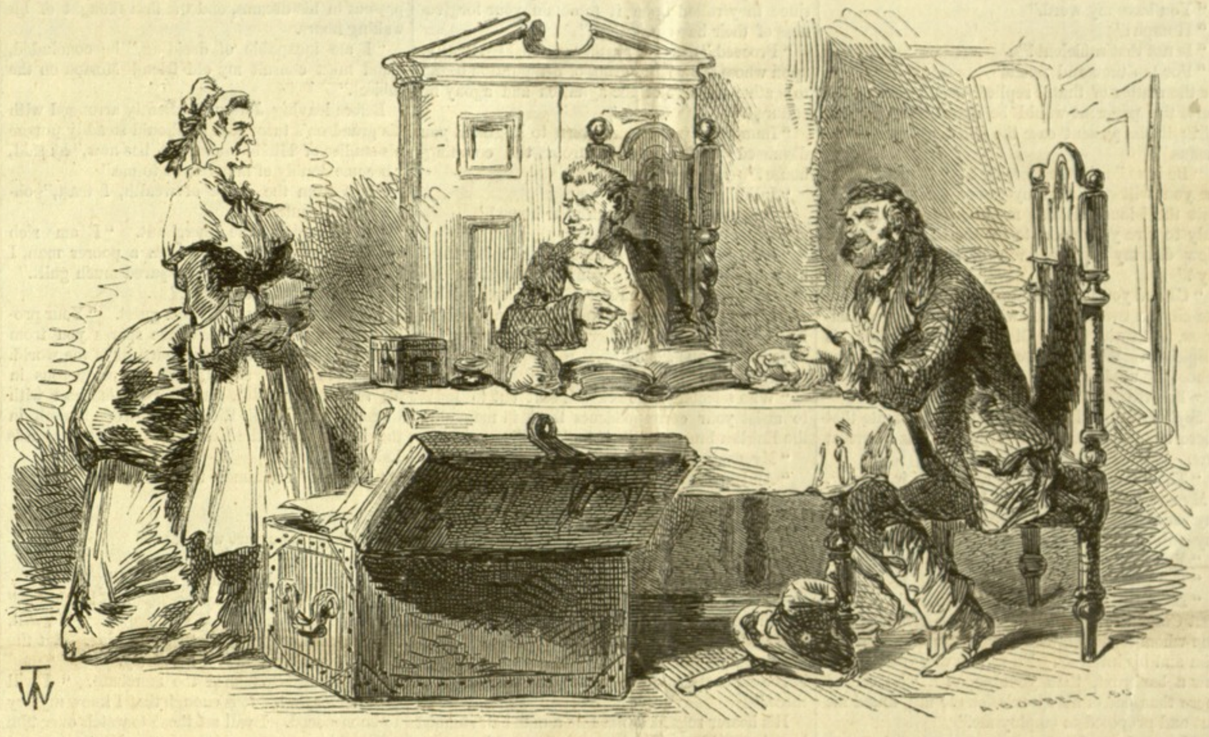
"What have I to fear?" interrupted Mr. Silex's visitor. "The certificates are all right; you can't get over them. The child died a natural death; what people may *think and say* is quite another thing—I've nothing to do with that. I ain't got no character to lose—no one respects me."

"If it's money you require," exclaimed the steward, impatiently, "name the sum, and, although I am a poor man, I will, if possible, content you. But here, I tell you once for all, you cannot remain!"

"And here, I tell you once for all, I am determined to remain," answered his visitor, with the most provoking coolness. "I am tired of living by myself, more especially since Jack left me. In London no one will associate with me, for all the neighbors know that I am a returned convict. If I change my abode, it is the same thing—the police are sure to whisper it; but here in the country, residing with you, acknowledged as your brother, who would venture to suppose such a thing, or, if they did, to breathe it? Ain't you quite as much lord of the manor as Sir Norman Boothroyd himself?"

"You had better take my offer," said Mr. Silex.

"I tell you I will not take it. It's a home I seek. I want to be respectable again, and there is no other way of my being thought so. You know the consequences if you refuse me."



ANDREW SILEX INTRODUCES MIKE TO HIS HOUSEKEEPER.

The features of the steward, which, during the discussion, had grown exceedingly red, now turned very pale; and once or twice he wiped the drops of cold perspiration from his brow with the back of his long bony hand, the same hand whose nervous grasp had so startled the nervous system of Jack, when he placed it caressingly upon his neck.

"It is in vain to struggle with our destiny," he said; "I submit."

"And am I to remain here?"

"Since such is your choice, an evil one, I fear, for both of us."

The tone in which the permission was granted, and the observation which accompanied it, did not escape the notice of Mike, who recollected the warning Jack had given him on the night of his being forcibly sent to sea.

"Look you, brother," he exclaimed, "fair play."

"What do you mean?"

"That I am not to be dealt with as cunningly as——"

"You dealt with Lillian," interrupted the steward. "Is that your meaning, fool? If I had any such wish or intention, I should have welcomed you, instead of refusing you an asylum beneath my roof. It is I, rather, who have cause to fear. Have you forgotten what the boy Jack said about the arsenic?"

It was Mike's turn to look confused.

"The warning has not been lost upon me. Hence arose my objection, that is to say, my chief one, to your remaining. There can be no confidence between us, nothing but mistrust and terror. You will do well, therefore, to reflect before you decide."

"I have reflected."

"And decided?"

"Yes."

The tenant of the Home Farm rang the bell. It was answered by a middle-aged female, to judge from her appearance, a very determined person. Her iron gray hair, being worn over a roll, displayed to its full extent a lofty, wrinkled forehead. Her eyes were dark, and deep-set in the head, but it was in the mouth that the character of determination was more particularly displayed; in fact, the development almost amounted to ferocity, so thin were the lips, and so tightly was the superior drawn over the inferior one.

"Margaret," said her master, "my brother has arrived."

The woman regarded Mike long and curiously.

"You will prepare a chamber for him."

"Which?"

"The one over the north porch."

"It has not been slept in since——"

"I know, I know," interrupted Mr. Silex, hastily; "but you can see to its being well aired. My brother likes retirement, and as he will remain here for some time, it will be as well to arrange for his accommodation at once."

The woman withdrew with a dissatisfied air. It was evident that, whatever her master might feel, she anticipated no great pleasure from the presence of an additional inmate at the Home Farm.

"Umph!" muttered Mike, as Margaret withdrew; "rather a singular looking person for a bachelor's housekeeper. I should have preferred a younger."

"She suits me," replied his brother.

"And a better tempered one."

"I find her obedient enough. But never mind my domestic arrangements; you must be content to take them just as they are. I am too old and too much accustomed to them to change, even for the *pleasure* of your society. You will not complain of her manner long; soon be used to it."

There was something so like a sneer in the last observation, that Mike mentally asked himself whether it did not mean a covert threat—in fact, he began to apprehend that there might be more danger in the housekeeper than in her master, and determined to be upon his guard against both.

"Have you any luggage?" inquired Andrew Silex.

Mike muttered something about a bundle which he had left at the village inn, where he had slept the preceding night. A messenger was sent for it, with directions also to pay the bill, and answer no inquiries.

"Whilst you remain here," said the steward, addressing his unwelcome visitor, "it is my wish and advice that you frequent the village inn as little as possible, and make no acquaintance with the inhabitants of St. Faith's."

"For fear I should hear how rich you are!" exclaimed Mike, with a grin.

"For fear your having been a transported felon should be thrown in your teeth," replied his brother, calmly. "You are mistaken if you imagine the circumstance unknown; a servant of the late baronet once openly reproached me with having a brother a thief, in the Manor Court, before all the tenants."

"And what did you do—discharge him?"

The steward smiled, and shook his head negatively.

"That would not have been revenge," he said.

"You are right."

"What became of him?"

"He ruined himself."

"How so?"

"Turned thief. A considerable quantity of plate disappeared from the Hall. This occurred a year or two after the scene at the Manor Court. At first it was supposed the house had been robbed. Detectives were sent for from London. They soon discovered that the thief was one of the household, and recommended the trunks of all the servants to be searched."

"And wor they?"

"Yes."

"And the plate?"

"Was found secreted in the box of the very man who had reproached me with having a brother a thief," answered Mr. Silex, calmly. "Poor fellow! I shall never forget how strongly he asserted his innocence. My master and I did all we could to save him; but it was of no use. The laws were very severe in those days; and so they hanged him, Mike, for a breach of trust."

The returned convict gave a low chuckle. The speaker looked at him with such well-affected surprise, that the disposition to mirth increased, and he indulged in it till the tears ran down his cheeks.

"Capital!" exclaimed Mike, as soon as he could recover himself sufficiently from his fit of mirth to speak.

"What was capital?" demanded his brother, with well-acted astonishment, as if he had been narrating one of the simplest circumstances in the world.

"Why, hanging the fellow, to be sure," was the reply.

"I did not hang him."

"Not with your *own hands*," observed Mike; "of course not; that would have been a clumsy contrivance; but you tied the cord round his neck quite as effectually as though you had done so. Placed the plate in the babbler's trunk, eh?"

"Nothing of the kind," answered the steward, calmly. "I was absent from Meldown when the event occurred—had been so for some time, on business for my late master, and only returned a day or two after the discovery. I bore the wretched man no ill-will—why should I? it was the truth he told, and I had always a great respect for the truth, Mike. You look incredulous," he added; "but I can give you a proof that I entertained no resentment towards him, not only in the efforts I made to save him, but in my conduct towards his widow, who has remained with me ever since."

His brother gave a long, low whistle—"Whew!"—a habit he had when anything struck him in a new light, or broke suddenly upon his comprehension.

"Well," he said, "that was kind, exceedingly kind. I scarcely gave you credit for so much benevolence. And so the widder has remained with you ever since?"

"Yes."

"In what capacity?"

"As my housekeeper."

"The woman I have just seen?"

"Even so," said the steward.

The peculiar sound was repeated. Mike saw—or imagined he saw, which with him was much the same thing—a clue to the whole affair. His brother had induced the woman, he doubted not, to place the plate in her husband's trunk, and permitted him to suffer for it. And he began to think that he acted imprudently in trusting himself into the hands of two such very decided personages. Evidently it was not a little they would hesitate at, to remove any one from their path that interfered either with their interest or safety.

Perhaps he was right; but time will decide whether he was or not.

Our readers doubtless will naturally ask what could have been the motive of Mr. Andrew Silex in making this extraordinary confidence—a confidence which he must have known would infallibly excite the suspicions of his brother. A little reflection will give a clue to his mode of reasoning.

Mike was naturally of a bitter, sarcastic temper, and he well knew would not fail to make many pointed and disagreeable allusions to his housekeeper, indulge in hints that must naturally create a feeling, both of hostility and alarm, and consequently predispose her to assist him in any project he might entertain against him; for Margaret seldom forgave either an insult or an injury.

He was not wrong in his calculations.

The first time her master hinted to her his intentions respecting his brother, the woman refused to have anything to do with the affair, which, as she said, was none of hers: Mike had never offended her.

Silex smiled.

"When he has," she added, "it will be quite time enough for me to take part against him; besides, is he not your brother?"

Her hearer might have asked whether the man whose death they had compassed between them—for the convict's suspicions of the transactions were founded on truth—had not been her husband; but he forbore. He had no wish to arouse an ill-feeling against himself, Margaret being the only person in the world, perhaps, whom he feared to cope with.

He had not long to wait: the scheme worked as he could have wished.

One morning his housekeeper sought him in the little oaken room, which she, of all the servants employed on the Home Farm, alone presumed to enter. Her features were more than usually pale; but there was a fire in her deep-sunken dark eyes which lit them up with an expression yet more terrible than their fullness.

"Well, Margaret," said the steward; "what is it?"

"I have been insulted," replied the woman.

Mr. Silex shrugged his shoulders.

"By your brother."

The gentleman guessed as much.

"And by your contrivance."

"My contrivance!" repeated Andrew. "You are unreasonable. What interest can I possibly have in setting Mike to insult you?"

"Who else could have told him my tale?" demanded the housekeeper, fixing her flashing eyes fiercely upon him.

"The first person in the village," replied her master, "whom he questioned upon the subject. Why affect this surprise? Your furious jealousy of your husband, your threats of revenge against him are well known. There is not an old servant on the estate but believes that you placed the proofs of a crime he had never committed where they were found by the officers of justice. You must have seen this general feeling in the manner in which all the inhabitants of St. Faith's avoid you."

The woman wrung her hands and groaned in the agony of recollection and remorse at the part she had enacted in the fearful drama.

"Do they also know *who tempted me?*" she answered at last.

"Perhaps not; but they suspect it. I am scarcely more beloved by them than yourself," answered Mr. Silex. "But they fear me; now, they only hate you. I can either serve or injure them; you can do neither; therefore they are silent where I am concerned, and speak out boldly respecting you."

"Injure them or not," exclaimed the woman in a determined tone; "your brother must not remain here."

"How is it to be prevented?"

"By sending him away."

Mr. Silex gave one of his peculiar laughs.

"You forget he is my brother."

"And you forget that the man I sacrificed to your resentment was my husband."

"A faithless one."

"Granted."

"You had proof of that."

"Ample," exclaimed Margaret. "Had there been a doubt, I would have perished rather than have injured a hair on his head. It is on account of this very Mike that you first vowed his destruction. The presence of the man is a silent reproach to me, but his words, his hints, his sneers have become an insult. I repeat, he must quit the Home-Farm."

"And I repeat," said the steward, "that I dare not send him away."

"You are in his power?" said the woman.

"To a certain extent."

"And would gladly be released from it?"

"At any price. But you have refused me your assistance in the only way by which I dare venture to rid myself of him."

"I promise it to you now," replied Margaret, in a cool, determined tone. "You are going in the morning to the market at Tiverton. Take your brother with you."

Her master nodded assent.

"Contrive to dine early," continued the speaker, "and return to the Home Farm without supping. The cormorant will be sure to demand food on his arrival. I will have it *prepared for him*."

"You are aware how suspicious he is," observed the steward. "From the day he first intruded himself here he has never tasted of any food that we have not first partaken of."

"I know—I have seen it," muttered the housekeeper. "But that will prove no obstacle to my revenge. We will both of us eat freely in his presence."

"*Both of us*," repeated Andrew, fixing his eyes upon her.

"I as well as you," answered the housekeeper. "You have only to observe one precaution; your brother is passionately, greedily fond of stewed mushrooms. Do not assist yourself to the dish; only take such ones as I shall give you; those you may partake of freely."

"I understand you."

The next day the steward of Meldown Park invited his brother to accompany him to Tiverton corn-market, which Mike readily assented to, for he began to tire of the monotonous life he led at the Home Farm. As they drove from the house in the gig, Margaret made her appearance with a small basket on her arm.

"Going to the village?" demanded her master, carelessly.

"Only to the home-croft," replied the woman "The dews have fallen plentifully, and if I am not mistaken in my calculation, I shall gather an excellent dish of mushrooms."

Mike smacked his lips at the word, and the vehicle drove off.

Margaret smiled bitterly as she gazed after it.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TOM STYLES IN THE CONFESSION BOX.

When Carus Kearn fled from the scene of the attempted crime, which he firmly believed he had accomplished, our readers will recollect that he was followed by Styles, who felt annoyed at not having been employed on the occasion. It was a breach of confidence between them.

Impelled by his guilty terrors, the unworthy nephew proceeded at a rapid pace, till he reached one of the innumerable narrow gullies worn by streams in the sides of the hills, and shaded with luxuriant foliage; into one of these he threw himself, but had scarcely recovered his breath when his pursuer, leaping through the interlacing underwood, stood before him.

Not recogniziug his confederate in his disguise, Carus drew a pistol from his belt.

"Hold hard!" exclaimed the ruffian; "don't you know me?"

"You here!"

"Of course I am. Badly managed, Mr. Carus; you had better have trusted me, and not have been seen in it yourself. Penny wise and pound foolish."

So his hearer began to think. Speaking aloud, he muttered something about never supposing that his uncle would have chosen to visit the island again so soon, and added "that the cards played badly."

"Because you deal them badly," was the reply.

"He cannot have recognized me."

His confidential friend expressed himself not quite so satisfied upon the point.

The assassin had been seen by more than the speaker. Several of the fishermen, stimulated by the liberality of Mr. Bently, and natural indignation at the crime, were upon his track, and their voices might now be heard calling to each other, as they beat the underwood like sportsmen in search of game.

"It's all up with you," exclaimed Styles; "you had better have trusted me."

Carus Kearn was not only a man of expedients, but of great promptitude in action. He had but one chance of escape.

"Give me your blouse and hat," he exclaimed, at the same time tearing off his own disguise.

The hitherto ready tool of his villainies would have refused, for he had not the slightest idea of bearing the brunt of another man's crime, but the cold touch of the pistol barrel which his employer held to his head, and the determined expression of his bloodshot eyes, decided him: he reluctantly stripped them off.

The instant he had done so Carus put them on; then, turning upon him, fired, having only hesitated to do so till the change was effected.

Styles fell upon his face, and the ruffian, believing he had accomplished his purpose, fled. It was the second attempt he had made during the hour to take the life of his fellow-creature, and, in both instances, without success. The fellow was not even wounded, the bullet having passed between the arm and his side.

"That is the way you provide for your friends, is it?" muttered the fellow; "very well, Mr. Carus Kearn, at last I know you."

The report of the pistol brought the fishermen to the spot, and, despite the assertions of his innocence, the speaker was secured. How could they doubt his guilt? the military undress coat and cap they had distinctly recognized were lying beside him.

That night Styles slept in the prison of St. Heliers, and information of his capture was at once conveyed to the merchant.

The narrow escape of his grandson had revealed to Mr. Bently a secret he was far from suspecting; namely, that the high-spirited boy had won a place in his affections, which, in the tumult of affairs, he had deemed could never be filled again. How many men vainly pride themselves on having acquired a stoicism, which, after all, is merely artificial—pronounce their feelings dead, when, in truth, they are only faded for the want of human sympathy. The dew falls, and, like the flower, the leaves of the heart unfold again. The danger Richard had incurred was alone wanting to convince the old man how inexpressibly dear the poor boy had become to him.

That was not the only change produced on him. What the reasoning of Peter Mangles had failed to effect, the indignant assertion of Richard that his father was incapable of an act of dishonesty, had, in some measure, achieved, and he now began to doubt whether he had not too harshly judged the conduct of his son-in-law in the affair of the Indian securities.

Conscience whispered to him that he had.

There was something sickening in the doubt, and he resolved, cost what it might, that his mind should be satisfied upon the point, one way or the other. And the morning after the adventure on the cliffs, he quitted the residence of the Reverend Oneas Brown, in company with its owner, to visit Styles, whom he believed the author of the crime, in the prison of St. Heliers. Richard would fain have accompanied him, but from a feeling of delicacy he declined being present on the occasion,

when the question to be investigated was the honesty of his own father.

"Right," said the old man, "I must see the ruffian alone. For once I am determined that cool reason shall sit in judgment; affection must not stand beside to prompt and influence its conclusions."

"But prejudice may," answered the youth, boldly.

"*Not now*," replied his relative. "Time was when such might have been the case, but I am changed; and humiliating as the conviction, in one sense, must be to me, by heavens, I know of no circumstance that can afford me more pleasure than the proof that I have been deceived in my opinion of your father—that his son will have no cause to blush in after life for the author of his being. Weakness, passion, folly, excess—all, save crime, may be forgiven. That is irreparable."

"Except by penitence," mildly observed the clergyman, who was present at the conversation.

"Irreparable in this world," added the merchant; "I spoke not of the future."

By the influence of his companion, who was well known and exceedingly respected in the island by the authorities, Mr. Bently obtained a private interview with Styles, whom he found in no very cheerful mood, pacing the courtyard of the prison.

He felt that his position was a critical one. His assertions of innocence disbelieved—proofs terribly against him. Bitterly did he curse the tempter who had first led him into crime.

A ray of hope, a very faint one, gleamed athwart his mind, when he beheld his former employer enter the courtyard of the prison. He knew his firmness, when he had once decided on the accomplishment of an object—his wealth and influence—how much he would sacrifice to achieve it. Now it was evident that Mr. Bently wished to conceal from the world the interest he had taken in his grandson; to continue the system would be impossible if once he were brought to trial—everything then must be made public.

Hastily weighing all these things, he came to the conclusion that, unfavorable as appearances were, his case was not so very desperate.

"So," said the merchant, eyeing him sternly, "this is the result of your dissipated, idle, worthless career—a felon! I told you, when your bad conduct forced me to dismiss you from my counting-house, what would be the result, did I not?"

"You did," muttered the ruffian, sulkily.

"It has made you a murderer!" exclaimed the old gentleman, solemnly.

"No it ain't," answered the prisoner, boldly, "for the boy is not dead"—he had learnt that fact from one of the turnkeys—"and if he were, it wouldn't affect me. It was Carus who tried it on."

Mr. Bently noticed the accusation by a look of incredulity and mingled contempt, so monstrously improbable did it appear.

"You may stare and affect to disbelieve me," continued Styles, "but it is true. What interest could I have in the lad's death? Ask your grandson to describe the man who assisted him to descend the rocks, and then cut the rope. Confront me with him. I ask nothing but fair play."

"Wretch!" groaned the old man, beginning to suspect that the man was speaking truth. "What injury had the son of George Hoffman ever done him, that he should seek his life?"

"And what injury had his father ever done you," demanded Styles, boldly, "that you should have cast him off to starve? Married your daughter without your consent; pshaw! his blood was as good as hers, his name as respectable; besides, he had her mother's sanction. But you listened to nothing but the evil spirit of pride and revenge within you; promised your nephew to make him your heir. Now, it seems, you have altered your mind, repented of your injustice to George, and think to atone for all by making it up by kindness to his boy, when you know the loss of him is breaking his mother's heart."

There was a truth in the coarse but energetic retort of the criminal, which caused the cheek of the wealthy merchant to turn pale. A day, one little day before, and he would have turned from the speaker in indignant silence, but now he condescended to justify himself to him.

"George was a drunkard," he replied.

"Not when you turned him out of the counting-house," exclaimed the prisoner.

"But he became one."

"After he had struggled as few men struggle to hold a position in the world, and failed for want of a friendly hand to aid him; he was crushed—ruined."

"Not by me," said Mr. Bently, eagerly.

"*By you.* It's no use denying it. True, you never employed direct means; there was no occasion, when indirect ones answered your purpose as well. He was known to be your son-in-law—the son-in-law of one of the wealthiest merchants in the city. Men naturally wondered why you never assisted him. Did you ever explain the cause? No. If asked respecting him, what was your reply? 'I have cast him off; never speak of him again.' This naturally created a doubt, and you know what *a doubt* can do in the commercial world. A panic came at last; many a firm fell, not half so honest as George Hoffman's. Had you but made a sign, he might have been saved; but you remained silent, immovable as your pride, and he fell, too.

"Then it was," added the speaker, emphatically, "that he was made a drunkard."

"*Made a drunkard*," repeated his hearer, slowly. "Explain your meaning."

The prisoner smiled knowingly. He had succeeded in raising the curiosity of his visitor, and this was all he wished.

"What is it you would hint?"

"O, nothing, nothing," ejaculated the ruffian; "but it shall all come out on my trial, if I am tried. I shall speak plainly enough then. It will be a rare feast for the newspapers. How the great city houses will chuckle at the disgrace of their great rival in business. All Lombard-street will ring with it."

"What mean you?"

"When it shall be known that Carus Kearn, one of the partners of Bently and Company, and one of the partners in Thornton and Company—ah, well! no matter what."

"Speak man!" exclaimed the merchant, indignantly, "if you have the slightest hope of obtaining forgiveness of heaven."

The prisoner interrupted him with a half chuckle, half whistle; to intimate how little that consideration weighed upon his mind.

"*Or my forbearance*," added the speaker.

The second observation arrested the cynical smile upon his lip. The forbearance of Mr. Bently was something tangible, and bearing on the point he wished to arrive at—his escape from the hands of justice.

"I shall say no more till my trial," he replied, in a more respectful tone of voice. "Where would be the good? I can't see it."

The last words were accompanied by a look which plainly indicated that the price he set upon the information which it was in his power to afford, was his personal safety; it was evident that to secure that he would consent to anything.

Mr. Bently reflected for a few minutes, during which prudence struggled with resentment.

"But suppose," he said, "that you should not be brought to trial."

"In that case," exclaimed Styles, eagerly, "I will confess everything."

"The meaning of the words, 'Then it was that George Hoffman was made a drunkard?'"

"That, too," answered the agent of Carus Kearn.

"And of the hint respecting my nephew?"

"I shall keep that secret till after I am cleared of this precious job," replied the fellow, with an air of reviving confidence, for he felt that circumstances were getting more favorable to him. "I must have some security that you will keep faith with me."

"You have my word."

"Humph!"

"Is not that sufficient?"

"For ten thousand pounds—twenty—nay, fifty, for the matter of that," replied the ex-clerk, "because the payment would be dependent on your will; in the present case the will may exceed the means."

"Be it so," said the merchant. "If you deceive me you will still be in my power, for you cannot quit the island without my knowing it; I have only to give your name to the sheriff to prevent it. How did my nephew know of my visits to Jersey?"

"Caused you to be watched. Your absence from the city on two occasions without leaving your address, even with Peter Mangles, first excited his suspicions. When he discovered your visit to the school, he readily guessed the rest."

"The villain!" murmured his uncle.

Styles shrugged his shoulders to intimate that there was little doubt but the epithet was a correct one.

"The ungrateful villain," repeated Mr. Bently. "My sister's son, too! whom I had destined to be my successor in the firm, whom I have treated like my own child; better!" he added, "far better."

"You may well say that," observed the prisoner.

"But his hatred to George?"

"Bah! George was in his way, and you see that Carus has few scruples how he removes any one whom fortune or accident may place between him and his interests. No sooner was your son-in-law a bankrupt, than your nephew, who caused more than one of his speculations to fail, found me out and proposed to employ me."

"In what way?"

"To promote the ruin of the man he hated. He it was who supplied me with the means of leading George Hoffman to the tavern, of teaching him to become a drunkard, and directed me to lead him home, when in a state of intoxication, by the street where we were sure to encounter you and Peter Mangles. His triumph would not have been half complete if you had not witnessed it; besides, there was the danger that at any moment you might relent and his victim be saved, and the best way to stifle all returning pity or sentiment of forgiveness in your breast was by exposing the vice and degradation of your son-in-law."

"It was deeply laid," observed Mr. Bently.

"And cleverly executed," added Styles. "I did my duty, and earned the price of my services."

"Fearfully!" replied his hearer. "The tale you have told me has rent aside the mask, and revealed to me the true nature of the serpent I have cherished."

"*Oh, you don't know half your obligations to* him yet; but you shall if you act up to your promise, and get me out of this precious scrape, which after all I don't deserve, and none but a fool would have fallen into."

"Or a villain," exclaimed the merchant, indignantly.

"True," said Styles; "*but I can be a useful one.*"

The gentleman thought so, too, and forbore to press him with further questions till the charge should be dismissed.

This the evidence of our hero easily accomplished. He distinctly swore that Styles was not the person who assisted him to descend the rocks and afterwards cut the rope.

Before quitting the island Mr. Bently had one more conference with the intended assassin. It took place privately in the library of the Reverend Oneas Brown, and at the request of the guilty man, without the presence of a single witness.

"Now," said the merchant, when the ruffian presented himself before him, "I have kept my promise."

"You have sir," answered the man, respectfully, "and I feel grateful to you."

"You must now perform yours."

Styles seemed to hesitate.

"Do not trifle with me," exclaimed his former employer. "The grasp of justice is merely loosened—a word, and her iron hands encircle you again. Remember that, if guiltless of the actual attempt, you were indirectly an accomplice."

"I know that, sir"

"Why do you hesitate, then?"

"Because what I have to say is so extraordinary, so improbable, that I question whether you will believe me."

"Proceed. I am the best judge of that."

"In the first place, you suspect George Hoffman of having abstracted securities to the amount of ten thousand pounds from the firm during your absence in India."

"I do."

"And of having negotiated them while he was in business?"

"Yes."

"You suspect him wrongfully, then; for it is my belief he knows no more about them than his son does, who was not born at the time the robbery took place."

"Whom do you suspect?" demanded Mr. Bently, eagerly.

"It could only be one of two persons," replied Styles, hesitatingly; "Peter Mangles——"

"Stop!" exclaimed the gentleman, indignantly. "The man you have named is the very soul of honor, integrity, and truth. More than a dozen times he has rejected my offers, nay, more, my entreaties, to accept a share in the firm, which his industry and talent for business has long merited."

"I said one of *two* persons," remarked the ex-clerk, submissively.

"True! true! and my anger at what appeared an unprincipled slander was somewhat premature. The other——"

"Is your nephew, Carus Kearn."

"Equally improbable," replied the merchant, although in a less confident tone. "He never had the keys of the iron safe."

"Were there only *one set*, sir?" demanded Styles. "But that is a question which, perhaps, I ought not to ask; you can best tell whether it bears upon the transaction or not. All I know is, that at the time the securities were stolen, Carus was involved deeply in railway speculations."

"He never speculates," interrupted the astonished merchant.

Tom Styles smiled significantly.

"It is provided against in our articles of partnership, that he shall enter into no private speculations without the permission of the head of the firm."

"That he did speculate, *I know*," said the informant, resolutely, "and lost heavy sums. I know, too, that your wife discovered it, and remonstrated with him upon the subject; what else she discovered I am unable to tell. *She died before your return.*"

Mr. Bently fell into deep thought.

"Suddenly, *very* suddenly."

His hearer started as if something had stung him, for there was a marked emphasis, almost a solemnity in the tone in which the words were uttered.

"A letter she wrote to you could not be found. *Who* could have had an interest in concealing it? Certainly not George Hoffman or your daughter, since they relied upon it to obtain your forgiveness of their hasty marriage."

"Proceed," uttered or rather groaned Mr. Bently, upon whose brow large drops of perspiration began to gather—a sign of the agitation and agony he endured.

"Immediately on your return to Engtland you dismissed your son-in-law from the counting-house?"

"I did."

"And your daughter from your home?"

"True, true."

"*Who gained by that?* Carus—for it increased his prospect of inheriting your great wealth. He rose in favor with you daily. You increased his share in the business, confided everything to him. Now, sir," added the speaker, "will you please answer me one question?"

"Certainly."

"Who selected the clerk you sent out to India to assist your correspondents there in managing the English branch of their business?"

"My nephew."

"And you sent him against the advice of Peter Mangles?"

"I thought it was jealousy of Carus's influence which prompted the old man's objections. Peter never spoke out."

"Because he is too honest to have done so," was the reply. "He had nothing but suspicions; and for that matter, no more have I; but when I know a man to have committed one act of villainy, I never hesitate to believe him capable of a second. It is a natural consequence, as plain as the rule of three."

His hearer regarded him like a man half stunned by a heavy blow. Every word the speaker uttered was noted, perfectly understood; and yet something else, which he had not uttered—a something far more terrible—appeared to occupy his mind, engrossing every sense and feeling.

"I have one thing more to ask, and I have done," resumed Tom Styles. "When you sent out the clerk recommended by Carus, had the securities been realized?"

"No."

"Have they been realized since?"

"Yes."

"I have done, sir," said the man, quietly. "I have told you all I know, and more—all I suspect."

"*All!*" repeated the merchant, emphatically, and at the same time fixing his piercing gray eyes upon his, as if he would read his very soul.

The ruffian remained silent: either he had nothing more to tell, or was resolved to conceal the remaining portion of the dark knowledge in his own heart.

"I believe that at last you have acted honestly," said Mr. Bently, rousing himself like one who has to contend against a sudden stupor. "Are you attached to the man (he could not call him nephew) who has hitherto employed you by any other tie than that of interest?"

"Not in the slightest."

"He has no hold upon *your fears?*"

"No more than upon yours, sir," replied Styles; "and yet it is not my intention to go near him again: I would starve first!"

"From repentance, I trust?"

"No," said the fellow, bluntly; "from a feeling of prudence. He has already attempted my life, in order to screen himself; and now that I have laid bare his character to you, he would find some means of paying his debt to me—never consider it canceled till I was in my grave. *I know him!*"

The merchant groaned in mental agony—perhaps at hearing such an opinion of the utter depravity of his nephew, perhaps at a vague suspicion, the very shadow of which was too terrible to be coatemplated with calmness; for it was enough to appal reason, and shake his faith in human nature for the rest of his days.

"In that case," he said, "you would have no objection to enter into my employment!"

"Not the slightest, sir."

"You will proceed to London," continued Mr. Bently, giving him money, "by the first packet, and, if wise, absent yourself from your usual haunts. In a week's time seek me at my private residence; I will then give you further instructions. Be faithful—to your own interests, I mean; and you shall find that, although I employ you in no questionable business, I can act as liberally as those who have done so."

"And Sheriff Godfrey, sir?" said the man pocketing the money.

This was in allusion to the instructions which had been given to that worthy officer not to permit him to quit the island.

"The restriction shall be removed."

"Ah, sir," said Styles, looking at him earnestly, "I begin to feel that the lesson old Peter Mangles sought to impress upon me when a boy was a wise lesson. Honesty is the best policy for all of us. Had I followed his advice, instead of being as I am—a homeless, ill-considered vagabond, ready to do any man's dirty work—I might have been a respectable clerk, in the receipt of three or four hundred a year. Sharples, who was my junior in the counting-house by two years, I am told, is in the receipt of quite as much."

"Quite," replied the merchant. "Before we part let us clearly understand each other. Although I pay you liberally for the services I require, I place not the slightest confidence in you."

"I know you can't. I have been too great a villian; but, thank heaven, not a murderer!"

There was something so bitterly regretful in the tone in which these words were uttered, that Mr. Bently was struck by it.

"Repentance," he added, as he finally dismissed him from his presence, "may do much—not the mask which worn-out vice borrows of hypocrisy, but true repentance springing from the heartfelt sense of past unworthiness. Go," he said, "and pray that your age may be better than your youth and manhood have been."

Tom Styles walked out of the room with a downcast air. For the first time in his life, perhaps, he felt the bitter degradation arising from the conviction that he was not an honest man.

No sooner was he alone, than the calmness which Mr. Bently struggled to maintain utterly abandoned him, and he gave way to a violent paroxysm of passionate sorrow—yielded to a feeling which evidently unmanned him.

"I must be satisfied," he murmured, "even if I rend the secret *from the grave!* No, no! it is too horrible to think upon! bad, heartless as he is, Carus cannot have acted with such monstrous ingratitude; there must be a limit even to his crimes. Even if guilty," he added, after a pause, "how could I accuse him? my sister's son! bring dishonor on my gray hairs—on all—all who shared his blood, or are connected with him: better let the suspicion rest barred in my own heart for ever."

But the suspicion—which we need scarcely inform our readers referred to the *manner* of his wife's death—would not rest. It haunted the speaker more constantly even than his shadow, for at sunset shadows are no longer visible; and it was in the lone sleepless hours of the night that the suspicion of the speaker became more vivid. It was present in his dreams, and the first thought of his waking hours.

"I am incapable of deciding," he concluded, "and must consult my old friend Morton on the subject."

Before leaving Jersey Mr. Bently arranged with his grandson's tutor that he should steadily pursue his studies of Hindostani. "It has now," he said, "become doubly of importance to me."

"Not from the desire of wealth, I trust," observed the gentleman.

"No," replied the merchant. "I am rich enough—too rich. Had I been a poorer man, I had been happier, and others spared much guilt."

"I do not understand you."

"How should you?" said his guest. "Your profession and secluded residence spares you from mingling in the passions and pursuits of the world. Envy no man," he added, "who is prosperous in his search of wealth, for his path is beset with thorns. Why I wish Richard to perfect himself in the language of the East is that his destination is India."

"Indeed!" exclaimed the clergyman, with surprise.

"Yes."

"And you can part with him?"

"I must."

"Why *must*, when you are so wealthy?"

"It is necessary to clear the honor of his father."

"I understand," replied Mr. Brown. "He will, I am assured, require no other incentive. But the late danger alarms me for his safety."

"Fear not," exclaimed the merchant. "I will provide for that. It is enough that I know my boy to be menaced. I will set those to watch over him whom his enemy cannot corrupt. You may trust to his grandfather's love and prudence."

In his parting interview with his grandson, the wealthy merchant explained much that the boy had hitherto been kept in ignorance of. It was enough. Richard learned that he was to vindicate his father's name, and he required no other incentive to exertion.

"Before another year has elapsed!" he exclaimed, as he bade his relative farewell, "I shall be prepared to start for India."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

COME UNTO ME.

Come unto me! too long has been thine absence—
Too long my heart has called for thee in vain;
Oh! when that kiss was given me at parting,
Didst thou not mean to come to me again?

When thy warm hand closed o'er my trembling fingers,
When thy dear voice uttered that low "good-bye,"
Thy kiss gave comfort, and the hope of meeting
Again, ere long, kept down this yearning cry.

But now it riseth—loud, and wild, and fearful—
I cannot hush its strong and bitter tone,
The wailing call for what hath long been wanting;
Oh! *come*, and bring me *peace*, mine own, mine own.

STEPMOTHERS.

BY RACHEL'S CHILD.

What ails stepmothers? Why, human nature ails them, that's all.

In the case of a real mother nature is all *for* the children; in the case of a stepmother nature is all *against* them; and this "odds" is a tremendous one, and it makes "the difference."

It takes a liberal share of grace to make a decent stepmother of many a woman who would without any "grace" at all make a very respectable mother. Being the former is all the way up hill; being the latter is all the way down hill. The very children that to an own mother's eyes are pretty and graceful—that in her opinion are good and lovely, would be, in the eyes of a stepmother, (just as good a woman as the own mother, perhaps even a better one,) "ugly, long-legged, troublesome, ill-behaved young botherations." Children are *all* troublesome and faulty; some very much so; and *love alone* transforms them into delights and comforts. Where self-forgetful and generous devotion, such as mother's feel, is not, it cannot be but that children will be a torment to whoever is condemned to the care of them. In nine cases out of ten, stepmothers hardly know the children whom they go to govern; much less do they love them. What wonder then that they soon find themselves distressed to death by "the ugliness of these young ones," who naturally hate the "usurper" (as it seems to them) of their dead mother's place, and very likely act just as hateful as they know how to act, from a sort of loyalty to their mother's memory. What wonder, then, that the new-comer begins to bear down more, and yet more, with that foreign foot of hers, until she has effectually "stepped" upon and crushed from the children's home all of its olden light and glory, and made it to them a land of the shadow of death? This is what she certainly will do if she follows the dictates of selfishness and resentment. Oh! the risk that woman runs who puts her unconsecrated feet upon the ground made holy by an ordained mother. She risks her own life's happiness, and her husband's and his children's. First, then, of all advice *this* should be given: "Never become a stepmother—never, *never*." It is an office too difficult and dangerous for flesh and blood; *but* if you needs *must* marry a father of children, because you love him so that you would be wretched without him, why, then you can afford to *risk* what would otherwise be *certain* unhappiness.

But don't go into his house expecting his children to behave well, for they *wont;* they are sure to meet you as an enemy, because you have taken their mother's husband. It is not in the heart of a child to understand or tolerate second marriages; and unless you can win their respect, by *first* gaining their love, they will never, at least at heart, do better than despise you.

But the stranger mother need not despair, for the love of childhood is no impossible thing to win. It needs but patience, mildness, toleration of their sore and afflicted young spirits, and consideration and respect for them, and, sooner or later, they are gained.

There may be a good deal of trouble at first—much, *very* much, that is hard to bear, and pride, oppression, and power may wish to rule; but the choice lies here: patience and forbearance now, trouble and self-denial now; or, strife and bitterness perpetual, and family division and wretchedness to the end of life.

Let the stranger suppose the children to be her own, and then ask herself—"If I were the dead mother how would I have my successor to treat these little ones?"

Then if she herself become a mother let her carefully note all the gushes and outgoings of maternal love toward her own child; and let her *act towards all the others* as if impelled by the same warm affection. Though utterly impossible actually to *feel* toward the step-children as she does toward her own, she will find it *quite* possible to *act*, in *all respects*, and in *every instance*, just as patiently and lovingly to them; and also to render an observer unable to tell by her manner towards them, or by her mention of them, which are and which are not her own. *This*, not a whit less, is the duty of every woman who ventures to take upon herself the most incompetently filled of all earthly offices, that of *mother to the children of the dead.*

BE SOMETHING.

It is the duty of every one to take some active part as actor on the stage of life. Some seem to think they can vegetate, as it were, without being anything in particular. Man was not made to rust out his life. It is expected he should "act well his part." He must be something. He has a work to perform, which it is his duty to attend to. We are not placed here to grow up, pass through the various stages of life, and then die, without having done anything for the benefit of the human race. It is a principle in the creed of the Mahometans that every one should have a trade; there are few doctrines better than that. Is a man to be brought up in idleness? Is he to live upon the wealth which his ancestors have acquired by frugal industry? Is he placed here to pass through life like an automaton? A man who does nothing is useless to his country as an inhabitant. A man who does nothing is a mere cipher. He does not fulfill the obligations for which he was sent into the world, and when he dies, he has not finished the work that was given him to do. He is a mere blank in creation. Some are born with riches and honors upon their heads. But does it follow that they have nothing to do in their career through life? There are certain duties for every one to perform. *Be something.* Don't live like a hermit and die unregretted.

BE SOMETHING. Don't be a drone. You may rely upon your present possessions, or on your future prospects, but these riches may fly away, or other hopes may be blighted, and if you have no place of your own, in such a case, ten to one you will find your path beset with thorns. Want may come upon you before you are aware of it, and having no profession, you find yourself in anything but an enviable condition. It is, therefore, important that you should BE SOMETHING. Don't depend upon Fortune, for she is a fickle support, which often fails when you lean upon her with the greatest confidence. Trust to your own exertions.

BE SOMETHING. Pursue that vocation for which you are fitted by nature; pursue it faithfully and diligently. You have a part to act, and the honor in performing that part depends upon yourself. It is sickening to see a parcel of idle boys hanging around a father, spending the money which he has earned by his industry, without attempting to do anything for themselves. BE SOMETHING, should be their motto. Every one is capable of learning some "art, trade, or mystery," and can earn a competence for himself. He should BE SOMETHING, and not bring down the gray hairs of his father in sorrow to the grave.

THE GRAVE OF THE BELOVED.

The grave of those we loved—what a place for meditation! There it is that we call up in long review the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us almost unheeded in the daily intercourse of intimacy—there it is that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn, awful tenderness of the parting scene. The bed of death, with all its stifled griefs—its noiseless attendance—its mute, watchful assiduities. The last testimonies of expiring love! The feeble, fluttering, thrilling—oh! how thrilling—pressure of the hand! The last fond look of the glazing eye, turning upon us even from the threshold of existence! The faint, faltering accents, struggling in death to give one more assurance of affection!

Ay, go to the grave of buried love, and meditate! There settle the account with thy conscience for every past benefit unrequited—every past endearment unregarded, of that departed being, who can never, never, never return to be soothed by thy contrition!

If thou art a child, and hast ever added a sorrow to the soul, or a furrow to the silvered brow of an affectionate parent—if thou art a husband, and hast ever caused the fond bosom that ventured its whole happiness in thy arms, to doubt one moment of thy kindness or thy truth—if thou art a friend, and hast ever wronged, in thought, or word, or deed, the spirit that generously confided in thee—if thou art a lover, and hast ever given one unmerited pang to that true heart which now lies cold and still beneath thy feet—then be sure that every unkind look, every ungracious word, every ungentle action, will come thronging back upon thy memory, and knocking dolefully at thy soul—then be sure that thou wilt lie down sorrowing and repentant on the grave, and utter the unheard groan, and pour the unavailing tear—more deep, more bitter, because unheard and unavailing.

Then weave thy chaplet of flowers, and strew the beauties of nature about the grave; console thy broken spirit, if thou canst, with these tender, yet futile, tributes of regret; but take warning by the bitterness of this thy contrite affliction over the dead, and henceforth be more faithful and affectionate in the discharge of thy duty to the living.

WATER IN HOT CLIMATES

In some parts of the East, considerable pains and expense have been bestowed on inventions to supply travelers with water, and these are always considered as works of peculiar benevolence. It is remarkable, that it is mentioned of the Hindoos in some parts of India, that they sometimes go a considerable distance to fetch water, and bring it to the roadside, where travelers are likely to pass, and offer it to them, in honor of the gods. Fountains are common in the East. Their number is owing to the nature of the country and the climate.

The soil, parched and thirsty, demands moisture to aid vegetation; and a cloudless sun, which inflames the air, requires for the people the verdure, shade, and coolness, its agreeable attendants; hence they occur not only in the towns and villages, but in the fields and gardens, and by the sides of the roads, and by the beaten tracks on the mountains. Many of them are the useful donations of humane persons while living, or have been bequeathed as legacies on their decease. The Turks esteem the erecting of them as meritorious, and seldom go away after performing their ablutions, or drinking, without gratefully blessing the name and memory of the founder.

THE WORD OF HOPE.

An Enigma.

BY AUGUSTA MOORE.

He came with honied words, and smiles bright as the rosy hours
That sport, on summer mornings, 'mid the dew-drops and the flowers;
I on his fearful beauty gazed, and *knew* t'would prove my bane;
But felt no wish to have him go and never come again.

He knew I trod a rugged path, trembling and sore afraid,
And with untaught, impulsive zeal, he sought to give me aid.
Mistakes do oft work miseries fatal as those of crime,
And all my need he wrongly read in that disastrous time.

And often while he spoke of "peace" a sharp and cruel pain
Was thrust by his unwitting hand straight through my heart and brain—
Where troubled streams had murmured on raged angry ocean's now—
His peace was iron in my soul, and thorns upon my brow;

Where hills had wearied me before rose mountains high as heaven,
Their rocky sides with forked light and Sinai's thunders riven.
With quiv'ring breath and failing heart I tried my cause to plead,
But with a smile he hushed my voice, and would not hear nor heed;

And when I told him, earnestly, what only would avail
To save me from the flood and fire, his anger made me quail,
And then *he left me*—helpless—where his "help" had hurried me,
To burn against the mountains' fire, or sink within the sea.

One word—*one little word*—had saved from all this fierce despair,
But pride and falsehood prompted him, and so he left me there.
Scorched by the lightnings, loud I cried, and tossed my arms on high,
Then shriveling fell upon the ground, and *thought* I fell to die.

But late remorse had touched his heart, and underneath my head
I felt his most beloved hands, I heard The Word he said—
Had heard it though the seal of death had been upon mine ear—
And straight I stood upon my feet, no more to fall or fear.

Where were the fiery mountains now? and where that raging flood?
As side by side with him I loved, now trusting him, I stood?
He could not stay—his duties called him far from me to dwell;
But with such cheer as *welcomes* bring I *now* could say, "Farewell."

THE LEFT-HANDED THIEF.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

"How many young men have been injured, and perhaps ruined, by false suspicion," remarked my mercantile friend, as we were conversing upon the subject of the "panic" a few evenings since. "Suspicion is like an assassin in the dark. It stabs its victim, and he knows not whence the blow comes. Or, it may be more like the keen frost which seizes upon the ears, the cheeks, or the nose, freezing the flesh and driving back the life-blood, and yet leaving the poor man totally ignorant of his situation till he comes in contact with heat, and begins to feel the stinging pain. But I believe I never told you of the only time that suspicion of evil was ever fastened upon me. It has nothing in particular to do with the subject under consideration, though it served to show how merchants sometimes lose money.

"When a mere youth I was placed in the store of Jonas Warton, who was a merchant doing a good business. I was frugal, industrious and faithful, and at the age of twenty-one I was advanced to the post of book-keeper, with a good salary. I had charge of the books and the safe, and all the money left over after banking hours was also in my care. I tried to do my duty faithfully, and I think I succeeded. Mr. Warton was a close, methodical man, with a quick eye, and ready understanding of business, and as I fancied that he was satisfied, I felt much pleased.

"I had been book-keeper a year, when I thought my employer's manner towards me began to change. He seemed to treat me more coolly, and, finally, I was sure he watched my movements with distrustful glances. I became nervous and uneasy, for I feared I had offended him. But the thing came to a head at length. One evening when I was alone in the store, engaged in making up my cash account, Mr. Warton came to me with a troubled look, and spoke. His voice was tremulous, and I could see that he was deeply affected.

"'George,' said he, 'I am sorry for the conviction which has been forced upon me. I fear you are not treating me as you should.'

"I managed, in spite of my astonishment, to ask him what he meant.

"'I fear you are not honest!' was his reply.

"Had a thunderbolt fallen upon me, I could not have been more startled. *Not honest!*—And there I had been for years, making it my chief aim and study how to serve him most faithfully! I do not remember what I said at first. I only know that tears came into my eyes—that my lips trembled—and that my utterance was almost choked. How long had he held such suspicions? I asked him, and he told me for more than two months.

"'Good God! You have suspected me thus, and still left me in the dark! After serving you so long—after giving to your interests all my energies—after striving for faith and honor that I might win your love and esteem;—to suspect me in secret!—to look upon me as a thief, and yet not tell me! Oh! I would not have believed it!'

"'Let us talk this matter over calmly,' said the merchant, his old kind tone coming back. He was touched by my agony, and I could see that he was wavering.

"I felt at first like telling him that he should have done this before; but as he seemed willing to reason now I found no more fault.

"'You have spent considerable money of late,' he began.

"'How?' I asked.

"'Have you not built a house?'

"'Yes, sir—and paid for it, too,—and have thus given my mother a comfortable home.'

"Mr. Warton was staggered for a moment by my frank and feeling reply; but pretty soon he asked—

"'What did the house cost you?'

"'Just fifteen hundred dollars. My mother owned the land. And I suppose you would know where I got the money. You, sir, learned me how to save it. I have been with you six years. The first year you paid me fifty dollars, and I laid up twenty-five of it. The second and third years you gave me a hundred; and of that I laid up sixty dollars a year. The fourth year you made me a clerk, and gave me five hundred. My mother was able to feed me, and as our little old cot answered for the time, I got along that year upon an expense of seventy-five dollars, so that I saved four hundred and twenty-five dollars. The next year you paid me six hundred on condition that I would help keep your books. I saved five hundred of that. This last year you have paid me one thousand dollars, and I have spent only the interest of what I had previously invested, so that the thousand was not touched. Of course my mother has worked, but she wished to do it. I have paid fifteen hundred dollars cash for my house, and have over five hundred in the Savings Bank. That is a plain statement of my affairs.'

"My employer seemed more puzzled than before.

"'Now,' said I, 'I have given you an honest statement, and will you be equally frank, and tell me all that has happened to excite these suspicions?'

"'I will,' he replied, taking a seat near me. 'Within the last year I must have lost over two thousand dollars! It must have been taken from the store! I know this, for I know the amount of goods which has been sold, and I know how much cash I have received. I began to be watchful four months ago. Two months ago a man paid to me, in the afternoon, five hundred dollars. I put it in the drawer, and on the next morning, before you came, I looked at your cash account, and found only two hundred of that set down. From that time I have been very watchful, and have detected a dozen similar cases. I have noticed every dollar that came in after the bank account was made up, and have also taken note of the amount entered upon the book; and during that time there has been a leaking of over seven hundred dollars! Now who has access to that drawer, and to the safe?'

"I was astonished. I could only assure my employer that I knew nothing of it; and I saw that he wanted to believe me. I asked him if he had spoken of this to any one else. Not to a living soul but me, he replied. I pondered a few moments, and then I said—

"'Mr. Warton, could I be made to believe that even ignorantly I had wronged you to the value of a dollar I should not feel the perfect consciousness of honor I now feel. There must be a thief somewhere. Some of the clerks may find access to the money? But are you willing to let the matter rest for a few days? I will strain every nerve to detect the evil doer.'

"He finally consented to let me try my hand at detecting the thief. He promised not to lisp a syllable upon the subject to any one else, and also to leave the matter wholly in my hands for one week. He gave me a warm grasp when we parted, and said he hoped I should succeed.

"On the following morning I entered the store with all my energies of mind centered upon the work before me. There were four clerks, or salesmen, and one boy, beside myself, in constant attendance, and all money received had to pass through my hands. Sometimes I made up my cash account at night, and sometimes not until the next morning. In the latter case I generally put the money-drawer into the safe, and locked it up. The key to this safe was kept in a small drawer to which there were two keys, one of which I kept, while Mr. Warton kept the other. The only other person who ever helped us in the store was Henry Warton, our employer's only son—a youth twenty years of age. He was preparing for college, under a private tutor, but found time to help us when business was driving. He was a kind-hearted, generous fellow, and a strong mutual attachment had grown up between us. At first I thought of getting him to assist me in finding the thief; but as Warton had promised to speak to no one else upon the subject, I concluded to keep silent also.

"That night I counted my money, but made no entry of the account. There was three hundred and forty odd dollars. I put it into a new calf-skin pocket-book—placed that in the money-drawer—and locked the whole up in the safe. On the following morning I found fifty dollars missing! I counted the money over carefully, and was not mistaken. I began to feel unpleasantly. My suspicions took a very unwelcome turn.

"During that day I pondered upon the subject, and finally hit upon the following expedient: When I had locked the safe up for the night, I spread upon the knob of the door, and upon the money-drawer, some pale red lead, being careful not to get on enough to be easily noticed. I had left the cash account open, to be closed up in the morning. When I next opened the safe, all was as I had left it. The next night I fixed the knob in the same manner, and on the morning following I found forty dollars gone! Upon the pocket-book were finger-marks of the red lead; and when I came to open my cash book I found the same kinds of marks there! So I had learned one thing: the thief knew enough to see whether any account had been made of the money before he took it! I felt more unpleasantly than before, for my unwelcome suspicions were being confirmed. I had gained new light. There was a peculiarity in the red finger-marks which told me a sad story. Still I wished to try further.

"For two nights after this the safe remained undisturbed, but on the third night I missed seventy-five dollars; and I had now set my trap more carefully. The red pigment was not only used, but I had put a private mark upon every bill in the drawer. The pocket-book and the cash-book were fingered as before, and the marks were clear and distinct.

"When the week was up Mr. Warton came and asked me what I had found.

"'Ah,' he said, as he noticed the sorrowful expression upon my countenance, 'you have failed to discover anything.'

"'Alas! I wish I could say so,' I replied. 'I have discovered too much. In the first place, the money has been taken from the safe, and the key left in its proper drawer, and locked up as usual. Also the cash-book has been examined each time to see if any entry had been made of the money. There has been one hundred and sixty-five dollars taken in all.'

"'But how do you know the cash-book has been examined?' Warton asked.

"'I will show you,' I said, producing both the cash and the pocket books. 'You see these red marks: I fixed a red pigment upon the door-knob of the safe, and also upon the edges of the money-drawer. You see these finger-marks?'

"'Yes,' he whispered.

"'And now,' I continued, 'just examine them carefully. See how the leaves of the cash-book were turned over, and also see how the strap of the pocket-book was tucked into its place. Do you see anything peculiar about it?'

"'Only that the finger-marks are very plain.'

"'But can you not distinguish the thumb marks from those made by the fingers?'

"'Yes—I can.'

"'Then tell me this,' I said: '*Which hand did the thief use most dexterously in his work?*'

"Warton gazed upon the marks, and finally he gasped—

"'THE LEFT!'

"'So he did,' I returned. 'And all the marks have been the same. The thief is a *left-handed* one; and he is acquainted with the store, and with our books, and can gain easy access here. But I have yet another mark. The last bills that were taken were all marked with a small red cross upon the numerical figure in the right-hand, upper corner. You can follow those up, for I have not had the courage, nor heart, to do it.'

"The merchant sank back as pale as death.

"'Henry is the only left-handed person upon the premises!' he groaned, gazing upon me as though he wished I would deny his statement. But I could not. I knew that his own son was the guilty party.

"'Ask me no more,' I said, with tears in my eyes—for the father's agony deeply moved me. 'The secret is locked up in my own breast; and neither to you, nor to any living being, will I ever call the name of the one whom I suspect.'

"The stricken man grasped my hand, and, with sobs and tears, he begged my pardon for the wrong he had done me, and blessed me for the assurance I had given him.

"On the following morning he brought me fifty dollars, in eight different bills, all marked with the red cross.

"'I know all now,' he whispered, in broken accents. 'Be kind to me, and let this go not out to the world!'

"I kept my promise, and lived to see the old man smile again; for when Henry saw the deep agony of his father, his heart was touched, and he not only acknowledged all his wild sins, and humbly begged for pardon, but he became a true and good man, and an honor and ornament to society."

READY FOR A "RAINY DAY."

BY CLARA SYDNEY.

In a pleasant, handsomely furnished room, bright with gas and glowing fire-light, sat, one evening, a gentleman about thirty-five years of age, and his wife a few years his junior.

Silence had for some time been unbroken between them. The lady's work had fallen into her lap, and she was gazing with a look of abstraction into the grate. The gentleman had been watching the changing countenance of his wife with much apparent amusement.

"Well, Mary, what is it that so enchains your thoughts, and that has kept your tongue so long silent?"

The wife, thus roused from her reverie, looked up and smiled.

"I was thinking, dear, how very uncertain a business man's riches are."

"Ho! ho! little wife, you were borrowing trouble, I'm afraid. Confess, now—wasn't you?"

"You always accuse me of *that*, whenever I try to look forward and plan *to ward off* trouble," said the lady, with a slight shade of vexation crossing her fair face.

"But you know you are very apt to do it, my dear. Now I never am so foolish. But let me know what more you were thinking. That long silence could not all have been filled by one thought."

"Edwin," said the lady, regardless of her husband's question, "how much do you call yourself worth—beyond all that you owe, I mean—what is entirely your own?"

"A dear wife and three pretty children," was the smiling reply.

"Yes, but what else? How much goods and gold?"

"You are pointed in your questions. Why do you wish to know?"

"If you'll just answer my questions, I'll tell you all my reasons for asking them."

"Well, my love, I am worth about fifty thousand dollars. Will that do?"

"All free—your own—without mortgage or incumbrance?"

"Why, yes, certainly—what does ail you to be so inquisitive to-night?"

"Then if this property is entirely your own, it certainly cannot be wrong for you to settle part of it upon me; and, Edwin, that is just what I want you to do as soon as you possibly can. The failure of Mr. Dyke has put this into my head. Where would his family—all his little children—now be, had not his wife always kept her property clear of his business operations? What I want you to do is to make me able to provide for you a home, and for your children an education, let what will come to your business arrangements. Will you settle twenty thousand dollars, or even ten thousand dollars, on me?"

Mr. Prescott burst into a hearty laugh.

"You *are* providing for the evil day, that's a sure case. Why, Mary, I'm not going to fail; and you are talking nonsense. Set your heart at rest, wife; I am able to take care of my family, and don't expect ever to need to apply to my Mary to be taken care of. Ah! ha! ha! If that is not a good one!"

"You may laugh if you will. I'm glad you feel so merry; but I can see nothing so very funny in the idea of providing in a fair day for a wet one. You feel very rich and strong *now*, no doubt; so did Mr. Dyke six months ago; but *why* may not reverses come to you as well as to him? You know you are always saying that I shall have everything I want as long as you live. Now let me see if I shall have twenty thousand dollars?"

"Upon my word, a modest request. Why, Mary, I don't know that I could draw that sum from my business with safety; but as your heart seems set upon it, I will see what can be done. Are you satisfied, my greedy dear?"

"For to-night," was the reply.

Next morning, having made herself as agreeable as she knew how, and having satisfied her "dear love" by a comfortable breakfast, she said to him, as he was preparing to go out—

"Now, husband, don't forget what you are to do to-day."

"Pooh!" returned her husband, laughing, as the subject of their last evening's conversation suddenly recurred to him.

"No, you needn't. Now, *Edwin*—you *don't* mean to put me off about that matter, do you? Now, dear Eddy, you really don't, do you? Tell me the truth before you go out. See, my arms shall be your prison till you speak what is your real intention. You can get away easily enough, but you will hurt poor me if you go, for I shall hold on as long as I can. You don't know how earnest I do feel about this matter. It seems to me as if it had come to this, 'home or no home,' and your will were this day to decide it."

"Yes, yes, I will, certainly—if you'll only let me go."

"Delighted to do it! Go, you best man in the whole town. I knew you would consent to make your Mary happy."

"*Dear* Mary!" said her husband, passing through the door.

His tone was financial rather than affectional. He always had indulged his wife, and knew not how to refuse her now; but, somehow, he didn't exactly relish the idea of making her independent of himself. *That* was the bone that stuck in his conjugal throat, and it scraped dreadfully. Still he had got to come to it, or hurt Mary's feelings, a thing which he couldn't think of, for she was one of the best and dearest wives that ever lived, and he knew it.

The thing was seen about, and finally done. A house was deeded to Mrs. Prescott, and ten thousand dollars settled upon her. After this her interest in business matters subsided. She let her spouse have all the care of her property, and pay all the insurances and taxes. That was convenient for *her*, you know; but then she never asked after her rents, so that Prescott lost nothing in the end.

The "crisis" didn't come; and in a year or two Prescott began to wish to use his wife's property with which to extend his business operations. This she resolutely opposed. He talked, and reasoned, and coaxed, and finally got almost provoked. But she was not to be moved a peg. Just let a sensible woman (who isn't the wife of a bully whom she fears) get her hand upon the deed of *a home*, and *see* when you'll get it away from her. No dog ever hung to a bone—no pet fox ever hung to a ball of yarn as such a woman will cling to that which is sure shelter for herself and her children. And Prescott's logic, his eloquence, and even his vexation, was in vain.

"Stick to it! that's you, true blue," laughed Edwin, merrily, one morning, after a discussion of the subject, his good nature all restored.

Would his heart have been so light had he known what a month would bring forth? Before three weeks had past, a bank in Ohio had exploded; then banks in other States; then down came mercantile houses, built too fast and too high. All men began to quake—the panic spread—crash after crash was heard, till the whole air seemed filled with down-toppling fortunes. Men were appalled, bewildered. No man dared trust his fellow. Edwin Prescott had stood bravely past the worst of the panic, but at last he fell; all that he had went by the board. His ruin was complete. Poor fellow! he went with pale face, and hollow eyes, home to his wife. Bursting into the room where she sat sewing, he threw himself on the floor, and laid his head in her lap.

"Oh! how it aches," he said, hardly able to hold up his eyelids. "Mary, do press your hands upon my head."

"You will feel better now that the worst is over, dear," said his wife, soothingly. "Only think how thankful we should be that we are all alive and well. And besides—— But never mind that, now."

She refrained from speaking of *her* property, as she had done all through her husband's troubles, fearing to appear triumphing over him.

"But, my love, the house and all this splendid furniture must be given up. I'm not going to continue to inhabit a palace when I've had to turn off all my clerks to the chance of starvation. Many who cannot pay fifty cents on the dollar are doing so; but I can't, even for your sake."

Poor Edwin groaned. He was very proud, and the idea of going down in the social scale was torture to him, more for his wife's sake than for his own, however. Mary thought it time to speak out now.

"Why, my dear Edwin, I'm not at all distressed for my sake. Remember, if you please, that I'm rich—for a woman—able, beloved sir, to support you and your family very comfortably indeed. In fact, quite well enough for your good; for you are getting too high notions altogether. I've never said so before, for I knew it would make no impression, but I really do think we have not been one-half so good, nor one-half so happy, since we got to be so rich and fashionable as we were when we were first married, when we never went to dancing parties, theatres or operas, and when we never spent so much time in dressing, calling, and the other forms of devotion to 'the first society.' It has always seemed wrong to me to spend so much money in dressing our perishing bodies, and so much time in trifling forms, when so little was left for real social enjoyment, or for attention to our own inner life. I hope now, dear, that we may go quietly to my own pretty and convenient house, and live as happily as the day is long. I'm sure *I* think we shall, and I want you to think so, too. Can't you, Edwin?"

All the time that she had been talking to him, in tones low, smooth, affectionate, she had been passing her cool fingers through his brown curls, and over his pale brow. Her touch was magnetic, and the throbbing pain and the excited nerves were quelled by it. Calmness and peace were settling over what had been wild confusion in Prescott's mind, and somehow it really *did* begin to look to his imagination a pleasant thing to live in his wife's house, and rest awhile from his labors and cares.

He lifted his eyes, brightening again, to Mary's face.

"Yes, Mary, I *can*; and God bless you, dear wife, for having, in the day of our prosperity, induced me to prepare for a time like this. What would have become of us all now, but for your forethought and perseverance. God only knows. But now we have both home and means of support, and I should be a child indeed were I to despair."

The end of our story hath not yet been fully wrought out. Edwin and Mary, with their five children, are happily settled in Mary's house, and living on Mary's income.

DON'T.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"You are sober this evening," said Mrs. Landell to her husband. "I hope nothing has gone wrong during the day."

Mr. Landell, who had been sitting, with his eyes upon the floor, silent and abstracted, for some minutes, roused himself at these words, and looking up at his wife, smiled, in a forced way, as he answered—

"Oh, no. Nothing has gone wrong."

"Don't you feel well?" The voice of Mrs. Landell was just shaded with concern.

"Well enough in body; but not so comfortable in mind as I desire."

"Then something *has* gone wrong," said the wife. Her manner was slightly troubled.

"Nothing more than usual," Mr. Landell replied. The forced smile had faded away from his countenance. Mrs. Landell sighed.

"Than usual?" she repeated his words, looking with earnest inquiry into her husband's face. Then she added, tenderly—

"Bring home your trouble, dear. Don't hide anything. Let me share with you all the good and ill of life. Hearts draw nearer in suffering than they do in joy."

"Bless your kind heart, Alice!" said Mr. Landell, a broad smile sweeping over his face, as he caught her round cheeks between his hands, and kissed her. "There isn't anything in the case so serious as all that comes to. I'm not going to fail in business—haven't lost anything worth speaking about. Haven't cheated anybody, and don't intend doing so. It's only this hasty, impulsive temper of mine that is all the while leading me to do or say something that leaves a sting."

The cloud passed from the face of Mrs. Landell.

"You will overcome that in time, Edward," said she, encouragingly.

"I can't see that I make any progress. Yesterday I spoke sharply to one of my young men, when a mild reproof would have been juster, and of more salutary effect. He is sensitive, and my words hurt him severely. The shadow that remained on his face all day was my perpetual rebuke, and I felt it long after the sun went down. My punishment was greater than his. But the lesson of yesterday did not suffice. This morning I was again betrayed into captious language, that wounded the same young man, and threw him so much off of his guard, that he answered me back with some feeling. This I regarded as impertinence, and threatened to dismiss him from my service if he dared venture a repetition of his language. When feeling subsided, and thought became clear again, I saw that I had been wrong, and done wrong. And I have felt unhappy about it ever since. I wish that I had more self-control. That I could bridle my tongue when feeling is suddenly spurred. But temperament, and long-indulged habits, are both against me."

Mrs. Landell encouraged and soothed her husband, and so won his mind away from its brooding self-reproaches.

On the next morning, as Mr. Landell was about leaving for his store, his wife looked up at him, and with a meaning smile, said—

"Don't."

There was just the slightest perceptible warning in her tone.

"Don't what?" Mr. Landell seemed a little puzzled.

"Don't forget yourself."

"Oh!" Light broke in upon his mind. "Thank you! I will not!" And he went forth to meet the trials of the day.

Almost the first thing that fell under the notice of Mr. Landell was an important letter, which, after writing, he had given to a clerk to copy and mail. Instead of being in Boston, where it should have been, it lay upon his desk. Neglect like that he felt to be unpardonable.

"John!" He called sharply to a young man at the further end of the store.

"Don't!" It seemed like the voice of his wife in his ears. "Don't forget yourself!"

This mental warning came just in season. The clerk came quickly towards him. By the time he reached the desk of Mr. Landell the latter was under self-control.

"Why was not this letter mailed, John?" The tone was neither imperative nor captious; but kind, and the question asked in a way that said, Of course there is a good reason for the omission. And so there was.

"I think, sir," answered John, "that there is a mistake, and I thought it not best to put the letter in the mail."

"A mistake? How?" And Mr. Landell opened the letter.

"It reads," said the clerk, three hundred cases of shawls."

"Oh, no—thirty cases," replied Mr. Landell. But, as he said thirty, his eyes rested on three hundred. "So it is! How could I have made such an error? You were right, John, in not sending the letter away."

The clerk went back to his place, and the merchant said to himself, "How glad I am that I was able to control myself. If I had spoken to that young man as I felt, I would have wronged and alienated him, and made trouble for myself all day."

Not long after this, a case of goods fell through one of the hatchways, crashing down upon the landing with a noise that caused Mr. Landell, whose temperament was exceedingly nervous, to spring to his feet. To blame somebody was his first impulse. "What careless fellow has done this?" was on his tongue.

"Don't!" The inward monitor spoke in time. Mr. Landell shut his lips tightly, and kept silent until he could command himself. He then calmly inquired into the cause of the accident, and found that special blame attached to no one. On opening the case of goods, the damage was found to be trifling.

"Another conquest," said Mr. Landell, as he went back to his desk. "Self-control is easy enough, if the trial be made in earnest."

A dozen times that day was the torch applied to Mr. Landell's quick temper, and as often was he in danger of blazing out. But he had begun right, and he kept on right, until the sun went down. And then he turned his steps homeward, feeling more comfortable in mind than he had felt for many weeks. There was no shadow on his countenance when he met his wife, but smiling good humor.

"You said 'Don't' as I left you this morning."

"Well?"

"And I didn't!"

"You are a hero," said Mrs. Landell, laughing.

"Not much of a one. The conquest was easy enough, when I drew the sword in earnest."

"And you feel better?"

"Oh, a thousand times. What a curse of one's life this quick temperament is! I am ashamed of myself half-a-dozen times a day on an average. But I have made a good beginning, and I mean to keep on right until the end."

"Don't," said Mrs. Landell to her husband, as she parted with him at the street door on the next morning.

"I won't," was the hearty answer. And he didn't, as the pleasant evening he passed with his wife at its close most clearly testified.

Reader, if you are quick-tempered—*Don't!*

RURAL FUNERALS.

In some parts of England the dead are carried to the grave with the singing of psalms and hymns: a kind of triumph, "to show that they have finished their course with joy, and are become conquerors." This is observed in some of the northern counties, particularly in Northumberland; and it has a pleasing, though melancholy effect, to hear, of a still evening, in some lonely country scene, the mournful melody of a funeral dirge swelling from a distance, and to see the train slowly moving along the landscape.

"Thus, thus, and thus, we compass round
Thy harmless and unhaunted ground,
And as we sing the dirge, we will
The Daffodill
And other flowers lay upon
The altar of our love, thy stone."

There is also a solemn respect paid by the traveler to the passing funeral in these sequestered places; for such spectacles, occurring among the quiet abodes of nature, sink deep into the soul. As the mourning train approaches, he pauses, uncovered, to let it go by; he then follows silently in the rear, sometimes quite to the grave, at other times for a few hundred yards, and having paid this tribute of respect to the deceased, turns and resumes his journey.

BE charitable; religion has humanity for a basis, and they who are not charitable cannot be Christians.

THE MARRIED BELLE.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

"True as the worm in this cold heart it is—
I am Mokannah's bride—his, Azim, his."—MOORE.

Oh, sweet the music seemed that stirred
The perfumed air of princely halls,
To one whose ear had only heard
Wild songs of birds and waterfalls;
And then the gems, the radiant light,
The picture's hues, the statue's grace,
And the exotics rare and bright
Low drooping from the marble vase—
All these had tempted her—and she
Was gifted, beautiful and young!
Then blame not so remorselessly
That love on pride's cold shrine was flung.
Alas, she'll sigh again ere long
For—violet-bloom and blue-bird song.

* * * * * *

In purple, flashing with the light
Of India's diamond-heart, through crowds
She glided, regal as the Night
When crowned with stars and robed in clouds.
And words of praise from that bright train
Were murmured as she moved around—
And yet her homage seemed in vain—
Why heard she not the soothing sound?
'Twas that a bracelet formed of hair,
And clasped with gold round one white arm,
Clung like a fatal serpent there,
Though warm its hue and light its form;
And, for a promise early made,
She dared not lay aside that braid.

Paul Allyn Raymonde was the name
Graved on the bracelet's simple clasp;
And o'er her cheek a crimson flame
Seemed burning when—*an old man's* grasp
Tore from his bride's unwilling wrist,
In playful mood, that triumph night,
The braided curl that erewhile kissed
His poet-brow of blue-veined white.
Just then, a stranger through the crowd
In traveler's garb impatient broke;
Calm seemed his brow, his bearing proud—
Yet trembling was the voice that spoke:
"*Mary!*" he muttered—this was all—
With ashen lip she answered, "*Paul?*"

Then came the thought of various eyes—
She said: "An early friend long gone."
None deemed him *more*, and in such guise
They left them free, and glided on.
She gazed—his boyhood's lovely hair
In careless waves of wandering gold;
His deep-blue eyes with dreamlight there;
His lip and brow sweet as of old—
These agonized her heart—and yet
The practiced features were serene,
Till that soft voice none could forget,
Said, "Mary, does this splendid scene
Bless more than had my love? If so,
I will not murmur?"—"No—no—no!"

"I dreamed thee lost—and I was frail—
Was proud, and lowly was my lot;
And I *must* live, I thought, as pale
My brow grew—I could bear this not.
And so—and so—thou knowest the rest."
"That love's denied should all things be?"
This feverish question stung my breast,
Till—"Hush, I've no reproach for thee!"
He whispered hoarse—"Thou'lt smile and wear
Thy splendor with crushed heart below—
I too my poisoned dreams must bear—
But this is life! Farewell!—I go."
And with calm brow and writhing brain,
Paul Raymonde crossed the seas again.

* * * * * *

THE SETTLER AND HIS SERVANT.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

Just before the breaking out of what is commonly known as Lord Dunmore's war, a man by the name of Jonas Parker settled in the western part of Virginia, on a small creek which emptied into the Ohio. His family consisted of his wife, three children, ranging from five to twelve, and a negro servant. The place where he located was some distance from any settlement or station, and the scenery around very wild and romantic, with lofty and heavily-wooded hills sloping back from the valley. He brought his family here early in the spring, built him a rude log cabin, and, by great exertions, succeeded in clearing and planting a considerable patch of ground the same season.

One day, near the close of summer, as Mr. Parker and his negro Tom were at work in the woods, about half a mile from the dwelling, the latter, who had gone down to a creek near by, came hurrying back, with an expression of alarm depicted upon his black features.

"Well, Tom, what now?" inquired his master, suspending his work to look at his frightened domestic.

"Oh, Marse Jonas," answered Tom, in a quavering voice, looking fearfully around him as he spoke, "I tink I seed suffin down dar."

"You are always seeing something wonderful," pursued the other; "but it generally turns out a very trifling affair. Did you see a black face in the water, when you stooped down to drink?"

"Oh, Marse Jonas, I seed suffin wossern'n dat. Dar, don't larf, Marse Jonas! Great golly! I seed eyes in de bushes—'relse I neber seed nuffin afore—nuffin—during dis life!"

"Well, eyes are not apt to hurt anybody, Tom," returned Mr. Parker, with a laugh; "I've seen a great many eyes in my time."

"Yes, but, Marse Jonas, it's a difference what they's 'tached upon."

"That is true, Tom. Well, what did your eyes belong to?"

"I tink dey was 'tached upon a Injin."

"Ah!" exclaimed the other, appearing for the first time a little startled. "Why did you not say so in the first place, you blundering fool! Pshaw! there are no Indians about here, except in your imagination. What makes you think it was an Indian?"

"'Case I tink de Injin was dar, dat's all," answered the black, looking timidly about him. "I tink, Marse Jonas, we'd bes' go down to de house, to 'tect missus and de chillern."

"I believe it would be folly to do so," rejoined Mr. Parker, "for I am almost certain you have seen nothing at all. Still, as you have made me uneasy, I will go back; but if you fool me many times, look out for a tanning."

"I's not de chile to fool you, Marse Jonas," said Tom, hastily gathering up the tools, while his master took up his rifle, which was leaning against a tree, and, keeping his eye warily about him, proceeded to examine the priming. "No, I's not de chile to fool you," pursued Tom. "If I didn't see de horriblest eyes—and dem dar eyes Injin's—den I neber seed nuffin—neber—nuffin during dis life—dat's true."

Mr. Parker now suggested that it might be as well to go down to the creek and make a search through the bushes; but to this proposition the negro excitedly demurred—saying that if there were Indians there, they would be certain to shoot him before he could find them.

"That is true, Tom," replied the other—"*if* there are Indians there, which I do not believe. However, as you seem so much alarmed, and as I am willing to admit the possibility of such a thing, we will return to the house."

Accordingly Mr. Parker and his servant set off, along the side of the hill, to a point whence they could get a view of the dwelling, he carrying his rifle so as to be ready for instant use, and the negro keeping close at his heels, with the axes and other implements, and both looking warily about them, closely scanning every tree and bush.

Nothing occurred to justify the alarm of the negro till they reached the edge of the corn-field, which ran down to the house; when, just as Mr. Parker was in the act of reproving his servant for exciting his fears without cause, there suddenly came reports of some three or four rifles in quick succession—instantly followed by wild, Indian yells—and both Tom and his master dropped together, the latter struck by two balls, one in his side and the other in his leg.

"Oh, my God! my poor family!" he groaned, as he gathered himself upon his feet, and beheld the negro stretched out on his back, apparently dead, and the savages, with wild yells of triumph, in the act of bounding forward to finish their work and take the scalps of their victims.

Hastily staggering to the nearest tree, Mr. Parker now set his back against it, drew up his rifle, ready for the foremost, and so stood as it were at bay. Perceiving this, and knowing too well the certainty of the white man's aim—and also feeling themselves perfectly sure of their prize, and therefore not caring to throw away a single life—the Indians immediately took shelter behind different trees, and began to reload their pieces.

To remain where he was, Mr. Parker now saw would be certain death in a few moments; wounded as he was, and continually growing weaker from loss of blood, it was vain to think of flight; and yet, with death staring him in the face, and an almost maddening desire for self-preservation, equally for his family's sake as his own, he felt that something ought to be tried for his salvation, though never so hopeless the attempt.

Looking quickly and searchingly around him, he perceived, about ten paces distant, a dense thicket, and believing if he could reach that, his chances of life would be increased—as the savages, without actually entering, could not make their aim sure—he gathered all his strength and nerve for the effort, and ran forward to the spot, falling in the midst of the bushes, and just in time to escape two balls of the enemy, which at the same moment whizzed over his head.

Seeing him fall, and supposing their last shots had proved fatal, the two savages who had just fired, uttering yells of triumph, darted out from behind their trees, and, flourishing their scalping-knives, bounded forward to the thicket; but ere they reached it, Mr. Parker, who had succeeded in getting upon his knees, and his rifle to bear upon the foremost, pulled the trigger.

There was a flash, a crack, and a yell at the same moment, and springing some two or three feet clear of the earth, the Indian fell back dead, at the very feet of his companion, who suddenly stopped, uttered a howl of dismay, and for a few moments seemed undetermined whether to advance or retreat.

That momentary hesitation proved fatal to him also; for the negro, who had all this time been feigning death, but was really unharmed, now thinking there might be a possibility of escape, clutched one of his axes nervously, quickly gathered himself into a kind of ball, made two sudden bounds forward, the distance being about ten feet, whirled his weapon around his head, and, before the astonished warrior had time to put himself on guard, brought the glittering blade down like lightning, cleaving the savage through skull and brain, and laying him a ghastly and bleeding corpse beside the other.

"Dar, take dat, you tieving red nigger!" shouted Tom, with an expression of demoniac fierceness; "take dat dar! and don't neber say nuffin more 'bout shooting down white gentlem."

The words were not fairly uttered, when crack went the rifles of the other two savages, one grazing the left cheek of the negro, and the other causing his right ear to tingle.

"Great golly!" cried Tom, ducking his head, "dat dar was most nigh being de finishering of dis chile. But as you isn't got no more loads in, you ole varminters," he added, shaking his fist in the direction of the savages, "s'posen you doesn't shoot nuffin more afore us gentlem does."

Then seizing the empty guns of the two slain warriors, he rushed into the thicket, where Mr. Parker was concealed, exclaiming—

"Marse Jonas, I's hopes you isn't dead yet, but two of the Injins am, and here I is, wid dar two guns, dat only wants suffin in 'em to blow de oders to de debil."

"Ah, Tom," groaned Mr. Parker, as he lay on the ground, making every exertion to load his rifle which his failing powers would permit, "thank God you have escaped! I feared you were killed at the first fire."

"Not 'zactly, dat time, Marse Jonas; but dis chile was dreffal skeered, dat's true, and seeing you drap, I t'ought I'd jest make b'lieve I's dead too, and wouldn't neber know nuffin more during dis life. But when I seed you get away, and shoot dat dar rascal dar, and t'oder stop so 'stonished to look at him, I conficluded I'd quit playing de possum, and get up and do suffin; and I did it—dat's true. Ah! dear Marse Jonas," he pursued, bending down by the side of the other, and speaking in a sympathetic tone, "you is hurt bad—berry bad—I know you is—and I's berry sorry; but you knows I tole you dar was Injin eyes in de bushes."

"You did, Tom, and had I then hurried immediately homeward, it is possible I might have escaped, though it is equally probable the Indians were on the watch to take us at advantage, in which case the result might have been no better than it is. Oh! that I was home with my family! for they must have heard the firing here, and be terribly alarmed, or if not, they may be off their guard, and successfully attacked by another party, for it is more than likely these few have not ventured hither by themselves. Ah! God forbid," he ejaculated the next moment, fairly starting to his knees, "that they should have been attacked and murdered first! But no! for then I think we should have heard their cries, and it is probable the savages would have wrapped the house in flames. I must get home, Tom—oh! I must get home. But how? how?"

"Why, Marse Jonas, ef you'll jus' let dis yere nigger tote you on his back, he'll fotch you dar."

"But what of the other Indians, Tom? have they fled?"

"Doesn't know—but guess dey am. I *axed* one on 'em to stop—and he did—but I guess de oders didn't want to."

"You are a brave fellow, Tom, for all!" said his master; "and if I live, I will not overlook this affair."

"Well, you see, Marse Jones, I is one of dem as goes in for prudems—for keepin out of de fight as long as I can keep out of de fight; but when de fight does come, I's dar—I is—during dis life!"

"Hist!" whispered his master, as he carefully brought his rifle forward. "I think I see one of the Indians peeping around yonder tree. Ah! I am too weak to raise the piece. Get down here, Tom, and let me rest it across your shoulder. There—that will do. Quiet now!"

"Does you see him, Marse Jonas?" whispered Tom, after keeping silent some half a minute.

Scarcely were the words spoken, when crack went both the rifles of the white man and the Indian at the same moment; and then the latter, uttering a wild yell, was seen to run staggeringly from tree to tree on his retreat; while his companion, taking advantage of the opportunity, bounded forward, and secured his person behind a large oak near at hand, keeping his rifle ready to fire upon his foe.

"Drop down, Marse Jonas," whispered Tom, "and let dis chile fix him."

Taking his master's hat as he spoke, Tom placed it on the end of a gun, and pushed it with some noise through the edge of the bushes, a few feet distant from where he lay. Scarcely was it visible to the savage, when, believing it to contain the head of his enemy, he brought his piece to his eye, and sent a ball whizzing through it.

Fairly chuckling at the success of his ruse, Tom instantly dropped the hat, made a thrashing among the bushes, uttered a few groans, and then kept perfectly quiet; and Mr. Parker, comprehending his design, kept perfectly quiet also, though managing meanwhile to reload and prime his piece.

But though he belived his shot had proved effective, the wary warrior was resolved upon prudence and caution. First reloading his rifle, he next carefully reconnoitered the thicket; and then, finding all still, he suddenly darted from his tree to another, and from that to another, and so by a sort of semi-circular movement came up as it were in the rear of his enemies.

Still finding all quiet, he at length advanced cautiously to the bushes, and began to part them gently. In this direction the thicket extended some twenty yards from the place where our friends were concealed; and with the assistance of Tom, Mr. Parker now noiselessly got himself into a position to cover the approach of the savage. Then waiting in breathless silence, till the latter had so far advanced as to make his aim sure, he fired again. A sharp yell of pain, and a floundering among the bushes followed; and Tom, seizing his axe, at once bounded forward toward his adversary.

The Indian was badly wounded, though not sufficiently so to prevent him making use of his rifle; but fortunately for the negro, it only flashed in the pan, with the muzzle fairly pointed at his heart; and the next moment the axe of Tom descended with Herculean force, and ended the work.

With a shout of triumph, Tom now rushed from the thicket, and, without heeding the call of his master, set off in pursuit of the only remaining savage, whom he could easily follow by his trail of blood. About a hundred yards from where he had been shot, he found him concealed behind a log, and in a dying condition. Too weak to make a defence, the Indian looked up at his enemy, and, extending his hand, said:

"How de do, brudder!"

"Jus dis way!" cried Tom: "dis is jus how I does to all sich rascals as you!" and with the last words the bloody axe descended, and was buried in the brain of the Indian.

Tom now went back to his master, and proudly recounted his exploits.

"Thank God, we are saved!" said Mr. Parker, warmly grasping the hand of his faithful servant; "and I owe my life to you, Tom."

"'Spect de Lord fit on our side, wid dis yere choppin'-axe," muttered Tom, as he coolly wiped the blood from his formidable weapon.

He then carefully raised his wounded master, and getting him upon his back, carried him safely to the house, where both were received with tears of joy by the terrified family.

Mr. Parker's wounds proved not so serious as was at first supposed; and the night following he and his family were removed to the nearest station by a small party of scouts, who had been sent out to warn and protect the more exposed settlers against the expected incursion of the Indians, who, as we have shown, had already begun their bloody work of laying waste the border.

Mr. Parker finally recovered, though not in time to take part in the sanguinary strife which followed; and Tom, for his gallantry, was given his freedom, and lived many years to boast of what he had done "during dis life, merely jus wid a choppin'-axe."

Flowers are the alphabets of angels, wherewith they write on hills and plains mysterious truths.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

PARENT says a young man courted his daughter, married her, took her to a neighboring city, placed her in the company of infamous people, and then deserted her. Learning his daughter's situation, the father immediately went for and brought her home. The infamous husband has returned to the city where she dwells with her parents, and our correspondent wants to know, inasmuch as there is no law that will punish the villain, if he would be justified in shooting him down like a dog, as, in fact, he has determined to do the first time he meets the scoundrel. No; you would not be justified in shooting the wretch. It is a hard case, most certainly; but in a *civilized* community no citizen should attempt to administer the law, or what he considers justice, with his own hand. If one may do so, then all may do so, and this brings us back to savageism at once.

IMPROVEMENT.—All kinds of food are healthful if eaten at proper times and in proper quantities; and any kind of food by injudicious use may be rendered hurtful.

J. M. B.—We have no bound volumes of the LEDGER for sale, but can furnish back numbers from June 7th, 1856, up to the present date, as our paper is electrotyped.

J. HOCKENBERGER.—Your subscription *can* date from the first of January last, and we will send you the back numbers from that date.

C.—You are very much mistaken in supposing that an editor copies all his contributions; such as need copying are not accepted, except in rare cases.

O. F. T.—The paper to which you refer failed several months ago. Be careful, next time, to whom you send money in advance for a paper.

MENTOR.—By all means let your son study mathematics, no matter whether he is to be a lawyer, doctor or clergyman. It is very true that mathematical knowledge is not *immediately* applicable to law, physic or divinity, nevertheless, it is indirectly connected with, and fundamental to, all science. It necessarily induces a habit of reasoning justly; it accustoms the mind to rational investigation and intense thinking. Now intense thinking, without which one must always remain on the surface of knowledge, is, to common minds, an occasional and irksome exertion, but to a mathematician it is habitual and easy. In all subjects of difficulty, therefore, a mathematician has an evident advantage: his conceptions will be more distinct, his deductions more accurate, and his conclusions consequently more just. As for your daughters, though it would not be advisable to have them pursue an extended course of mathematics, no harm could result from their studying algebra and geometry; on the contrary, such studies, if properly pursued, would be highly beneficial to them.

CONJUGAL.—Husbands and wives should settle their squabbles without appealing to strangers. As a general thing it is the husband's fault when there is strife in a family. The existence of domestic bickerings usually shows that the husband is either too selfish or too weak to prevent them. Xantippe still has her faithful representatives on earth, no doubt; and when a meek man happens to get one of them for his wife, he is of course done for, and is not responsible for the domestic thunderstorms which occur under his roof. If your case is of the last-mentioned kind, you are to be pitied; if you come under the first-mentioned class you are to be despised.

R. S. having read that a bill has passed the State Senate of Ohio, prohibiting the marriage of first cousins, anxiously inquires if there is any truth in the reports that the offspring of parents who are so nearly related are apt to be rickety, deaf and dumb, blind, deformed, insane, idiotic, etc., etc. We only know what persons who have investigated the subject say, namely, that the more nearly parents are related to each other the more apt their children are to be afflicted with the diseases above-mentioned; and that the relationship of first cousins is not so remote as to *insure their offspring against* such deplorable ailments.

R. C. M.—Sir Walter Scott was at one time very well off. It is said that for several years his income from his works was over seventy-five thousand dollars per annum. He finally lost much money by the failure of his publisher, and greatly involved himself by extravagant outlays upon his "baronial residence," Abbottsford. Burns never attained unto much permanent worldly prosperity, though he ran a very brilliant but brief social career when he first went to Edinburgh. He was a man of most excellent heart, and deserved a better fate than he met with.

BENJAMIN.—You did right in not accepting the challenge. Had you accepted it, you would have been liable to a prosecution, and broken not only the law of the State, but the law of God. The time has gone by when honor or character can be brightened on the duelist's field. The best guide in such matters, as in everything else relating to morals, is the Sermon on the Mount.

CLAUDE.—You have not stated anything which enables us to see how you could hunt up and recover the property left by your grandmother's brother. If you are in earnest about it, ascertain the name of some good lawyer in London and send him all the facts you can that bear upon the case, with a fee of a hundred dollars, and ask him to look into the matter.

NEPHEW.—"Ladies" who, on overhearing a conversation such as you describe, make it known that they detected the use of a phrase which was impolite and get up a high-pressure state of delicate indignation on account of it, probably have not much genuine modesty to spare. A *lady* would not speak of such a thing.

W.—You were justified in knocking the burglar down with the hammer, and had you killed him you would have been blameless. We think it would not only be the right but the duty also of a man who, on being aroused in the night and striking a light, should find a burglar in his house, to cut or shoot the villain down without ceremony.

DOCTOR.—The frankest and the most straightforward way is the best, in everything. Tell your sponging friend that you cannot and will not stand his conduct any longer. You can do this in a kind manner, and if he takes offence, let him be offended.

INQUIRER.—Letters are sometimes addressed to ladies as you mention, namely: Mrs. Rev. John Smith, Mrs. Capt. John Smith, or whatever their husband's title may be, but we are inclined to the opinion that the custom is "more honored in the breach than in the observance."

J.—No. A book-keeper should be able to write grammatically, as he necessarily has to write many letters, and it would not do for him to blunder in his syntax and orthography. You should study grammar and read as much as possible about your business.

CHARLES H. S. sends the following problem for the readers of the LEDGER, namely: Will a body projected perpendicularly into the air acquire a force by falling equal to the projecting force? What say the boys and girls who are studying natural philosophy?

PUGNACIOUS.—You are *too* pugnacious. There can be no excuse sufficient to palliate the raising of a son's hand against his father, except to save life or prevent dishonor. And even then, the force exercised should be that of restraint only, and not in any manner vindictive or retaliatory.

REFLECTOR.—You *can* engage yourself to a young lady without asking the consent of her parents or yours, but it would be unfilial to your own and disrespectful to hers to do so. As you are a minor, you could not be held to such an engagement, or any other, if you should wish to avoid it.

ROSALIND HUBERT.—You must wait until the gentleman shows his colors. If he really loves you he will not be able to conceal the fact from you long, unless you are much less keen and penetrating about such matters than most of your sex.

SAN SOUCI.—You should show the pertinacious lover, by your manner, that his attentions are disagreeable to you, and if he will not take a gentle hint, give him a forcible one.

JACK MANDERS.—You may get along with the matter, in the manner you propose, without difficulty, but we think that the most straightforward way would be the best.

N. T. L.—Bind the child's ankle with cotton batting and keep it wet with tincture of arnica. That is the best thing we know of for a sprain or a cut.

KITTY.—Yes. In writing an article for a newspaper, write on only one side of a leaf, and let your handwriting be as plain as possible.

W. B. S.—Obey your parents and don't talk about getting married until you are of age.

HEIR.—Your share of the claims against the Federal Government for the famous "French spoliations" would be valuable, were there any probability that the claims will ever be paid. We cannot give you "all the facts about these claims," because to do so would require several entire numbers of the LEDGER. In amount they reach many millions of dollars, and are claims for nearly two thousand vessels with more or less valuable cargoes, belonging to our citizens, which were captured by the French in violation of existing treaties and of international law, and they date from the year 1791 up to the 31st of July, 1801, embracing the whole period of the French revolution. The subject has been before Congress for over fifty years—first early in 1802, on the petition of the original claimants, most of whom have since died. Their successors, in the character of executors, administrators, widows, heirs, &c., have followed the matter up from that day to this, with petition after petition; the Legislatures of Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Alabama have urged upon Congress the favorable consideration of the subject, and twenty-two reports of Congressional committees have been made in favor of the claimants, and yet nothing has been done by the government to secure to them their just rights. This being the case, you can yourself judge of what poor value your share of a "claim" must be. It would be better for you to give up all hope of getting it. Many a person has been ruined by living on in idleness from year to year, under the delusive hope of getting his "French Spoliation claim allowed."

MRS. L.—Botany is not altogether a useless study, and your children, daughters and sons, might render it quite beneficial. The extravagant claims to utility for this study which are put forth by some, are absurd. Botany should be considered as a science of amusement, but with this strong recommendation, that it may be acquired without stealing a single hour from more important studies. A person who studies in-doors all day and every day for a few years, becomes unhealthy and stupid; therefore, a part of every student's time must be lost in exercise. But this time is not lost to a botanist. He studies where other men, for want of books, must lounge. To him the book of nature lies constantly open. He reads as he walks along; every field is a new chapter, every leaf an object of attention, and every flower a prize. A general knowledge of botany, therefore, may be learned at times when other studies are necessarily suspended, and consequently it interferes with no other science. We say a *general* knowledge, which is enough for any one who studies botany for amusement; a universal and minute botanist must unavoidably neglect things of more importance.

S. T. Y.—There were many reasons for Washington's popularity and for the unbounded confidence reposed in him by the people of this country. He was a man of inflexible integrity and the first *gentleman* of his time. We use the word gentleman both in its broadest and in its strictest sense, as it was used in the olden time. Washington was very polished and courtly in his manners, and yet was no fop or weakling. He excelled in all the manly sports and games, and was the best horseman of his age and country. Jefferson, in one of his letters, says, in substance, that Washington on horseback was the most splendid-looking man he ever saw, and Jefferson himself was considered one of the best horsemen of those days. The events which transpired during the Revolution furnished conclusive proofs of Washington's superior sagacity and judgment and put the finishing-stroke to his character, whereby he was unmistakeably placed "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," and in that proud eminence he has grown firmer and firmer to the present hour.

A MISERABLE WIFE.—If what you say is true, your husband is a miserable brute, and you should at once set at work to obtain a divorce from him. Your duty to your children as well as to yourself demands that you should do so. Of course he does not love you. Such a man is incapable of love. You say that you love him better than aught else on earth. How can you do so, when you are knowing to his vile conduct? We cannot understand how a woman who is *certain* that a man is guilty of unspeakable debauchery and of the most loathsome conduct, can "love him better than aught else in the world."

O. P. Q.—Your question covers a good deal of ground. We cannot tell how many comic papers have been started from time to time in this city. The Picayune, we believe, is the only one, however, that ever paid expenses. It has recently passed into the hands of Messrs. Bellew & Woodward, who will doubtless still increase its circulation. Mr. Bellew is the well-known artist who has made most of the comic designs for Harpers' publications. Hereafter he will devote all his energies to the Picayune; and, consequently, we may expect to find in it a first-class publication of its kind.

DELIA.—Your ambition to acquire a superior education is a very laudable one, and we hope you will succeed. You can do much towards accomplishing the desired result by studying during the hours you are not engaged in teaching your school, but you should not attempt too much. "Slow and sure" is the best motto. Should you overtax your brain and injure your constitution, no amount of exertion could make up for the injury. Remember that a healthy body is quite as essential as a healthy mind.

ROSALIND.—It is all very well, after a thing has been done and turned out disastrously, to say it should have been done so and so, and it should not have been done in this way and that; but it would be much better to utter such sage remarks before the evil is done, when they would stand a chance of doing some good. You should stop advising your friend as to what she ought to have done in the past, and endeavor to throw some light upon what it would be best for her to do in the future.

ANXIETY says his brother has been bitten by a dog that is now perfectly well; but he has been told that, in case the dog should ever go mad, his brother would have the hydrophobia, and that the dog should therefore be killed, so as to prevent such a terrible catastrophe. We cannot speak from positive knowledge on this subject, but, judging from all known principles of medical science, and the nature of things, we should say that the bitten man's future is not at all dependent on the dog's.

RACKENSACK, Nashville.—Ten cents is an outrageous price to ask for the LEDGER, and gives the seller nearly four hundred per cent. profit. Dealers have to pay but 2 3-4 cents a copy for it, and should be contented with a hundred per cent. profit, at the most. You and other buyers of the LEDGER in Nashville should induce some one to start an opposition store for its sale, in order that you may get it at a reasonable price.

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTORS.—We respectfully say to you, one and all, that we do not wish for your favors; that we do not and will not read them; and that we never return manuscripts which are thrust upon us against our consent. In fact, no attention whatever is paid to manuscripts thus sent us. They are all incontinently turned over to the flames, without the slightest examination.

LOVER.—You should not be too exacting of your lady love as to the attentions she pays to her old friends, or her new ones, either. Because she loves you, there is no reason that she should not be courteous and friendly to those whom she and her family have long known and esteemed. You are like an overgrown boy with a huge slice of gingerbread.

S. Y.—All we can say in regard to your case is, that a man should always keep his promises. If you made a *positive* promise, the fulfillment of which depended on a contingency, you did wrong. You should have stated the contingency itself, and informed the other party that your promise was based upon it.

CONSUMPTION.—We cannot prescribe for your case. According to your account of your condition, your days are numbered. We hope your case is not so deplorable as you represent it to be. You should at once consult some eminent physician, and take the best possible care of your body.

PARSEE.—It is impossible to speak with absolute accuracy concerning future historical events; but it is rational to believe that Great Britain will ere long regain all her former power in India, and perhaps ultimately bring the greater part of Asia under her sway.

DAVID.—It will make but little difference in which of the Western States you "settle down." The main thing is to settle down *somewhere* and *stay there*. Energy, industry, discretion and economy will enable you to thrive anywhere.

J. C. T.—An apprentice is bound to work for his master as many years as the indentures state. The numbers of the LEDGER containing the story of "THE BRIDE OF AN EVENING" will cost forty-four cents.

MICHIGAN CITY.—A young man who is on such excellent terms with himself as you seem to be, should be able to ascertain what a "young girl's sentiments towards him" are. Why don't you ask her?

A PHILADELPHIA SUBSCRIBER.—You had better talk the matter over with the young lady. You will undoubtedly find her quite reasonable. Women are always more discreet and unselfish than men in matrimonial affairs.

LONGFELLOW.—The left arm is usually offered by a lady to a gentleman who wishes to escort her to the table; but should he offer his right arm, it would be a matter of no consequence.

GUSTAVUS.—From all we have read and heard on the subject, we think Iowa is an excellent State for farmers to settle in. The climate is healthy, the soil fertile, and land is cheap and abundant.

GENEVIEVE.—No. Genevieve and Louise are not the same name, any more than John and Lemuel are.

S. D.—Ether, or spirits of turpentine, will remove paint, grease, or tar from clothing.

D. McC.—You had better learn a trade than travel with a showman.

PETER.—Back numbers of the LEDGER are four cents each.

RALPH.—You must decide such a matter for yourself.

*** *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*